

DRAMA

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INTRODUCTION: A PREFACE TO DRAMA

Drama is the specific mode of fiction represented in performance. The term comes from a Greek word meaning "action" (Classical Greek: drama), which is derived from the verb meaning "to do" or "to act". The origin of the Drama is deep rooted in the religious predisposition of mankind. The ancient Greek and Roman Dramas were mostly concerned with religious ceremonials of people. It was the religious element that resulted in the development of Drama.

What is Drama?

Drama is a type of literature telling a story, which is intended to be performed to an audience on the stage. It is an imitation of life. It is different from other forms of literature because of its unique characteristics. It's a medium of communication.



Generally, while Drama is the printed text of a play, the word *Theatre* often refers to the actual production of the text on the stage. Theatre involves action taking place on the scenery, the accompanying music, the costumes, the atmosphere and soon.

Definition of Drama

“A play is a just and lively image of human nature, representing its passions and hum-ours and the changes of fortune to which it is subject for the delight and instruction of mankind”.

- *John Dryden*

It is often believed that the art of drama is western form of literature and it has been originated from the Greeks. It is also assumed that it traces its origin in Egypt as far back as 3200 B.C. Scholars are divided on the origin of drama. Many scholars trace the origin of drama to wordless actions like ritual dances and mimes performed by dancers, masked players or priests during traditional festivals or ceremonies.

The unit one of NTA NET syllabus in English literature which deals with drama continues to be popular and one of the frequently asked topics in NET exam. This file is designed in simple and direct manner. A proper description of every literary dramatist and their genre of writing, their form, themes and plot is discussed in a complete framework. The wealth of illustrative examples enables the students to assimilate the content without being intimidated by its range and wide scope. It is well organized and classified according to various literary dramatists as **English Drama and Dramatists**, which is again segregated into various literary ages like **Elizabethan Drama, Restoration Drama, Jacobean Drama, Puritan Drama, Modern Drama**. The second classification deals with the **American Dramatists**, further to be taken by **Indian Theatre and Drama** concluded by **African Dramatists**. This file provides a neat summary of the numerous literary trends and movements associated with the Drama of historical ages. Keeping pace with the change in syllabus, Drama has an important role to play in understanding the literary world and to qualify exams for assistant professor. I hope students will understand the links between different literature and connect a link between historical aspect of literary world and contemporary trends. The syllabus is just like IPL cricket match where the cricketers across different nations join hands

and play together. Similarly, all the units are focused on the literary genre and not on one particular literature. So students need to focus on new strategies.

- Dr Anurag Agarwal

EVOLUTION OF ENGLISH DRAMA

The English drama at its initial stage developed from religious rituals, commemorating the birth and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The English drama was born in Churches. In order to make people familiar with the Bible, the incidents from the life of Christ, the Bishops in the Church began to dramatize. In the 13th and 14th centuries, some plays, describing the life of Christ and other saints, were called **Morality and Miracle plays**. At the end of 15th century, the play called ‘**The Morality Play**’ took birth. The morality play mark the next stage in the growth of the drama in England. These plays were didactic and religious in nature. The characters were no longer Biblical figures but personified virtues and vices. **Everyman (1490)** is the finest of this type of play. Sackville and Norton’s, “**Gorboduc**” (1561) was the first regular English Tragedy. Udall’s, “**Ralph Roister Doister**” (1566) was the first English regular comedy. The Elizabethan Drama reached its highest point in the works of William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe. After the Restoration period drama restored and in modern age various types of drama are developed. In modern age *G. B. Shaw* and *John Galsworthy* were the great dramatists.



THE ELIZABETHAN DRAMA

After the establishment of The Theatre in 1576 there came a huge competition in the production of drama. Novelty in drama is always needed for success. The managers were finding such men who could patch up old plays with new matters. A bunch of bohemian writers associated with either Oxford or Cambridge University came forward in the literary canvas with their handful of contribution in the field of drama. They are called “**University Wits**”. They absorbed the new renaissance spirit and synthesizing the vigour of the native tradition with more refined classicism. The group consisted of seven- John Lyly, Thomas Kyd, Thomas Nash, Thomas Lodge, George Peele, Robert Greene and Christopher Marlowe. So they are known as “*The seven Stars of the Cosmos.*”

The constellation of University wits made the Elizabethan drama more popular with Renaissance humanism and pride of patriotism. English drama for the first time in their hands recognized its potentialities and exuberance. They wrote classical plays, courtly comedies, farces, chronicle plays, melodramas etc. They gave thrill, action, sensation, humour and music. Undeniably the University Wits paved the way for Shakespeare and other playwrights of the coming of ages.



1. **George Peele** (c.1558-98) who was born in London was educated at **Broadgate Hall, Oxford, where he completed his degree in arts in 1579**. Peele was an actor as well as a writer of plays, and for some time, he was a member of Lord Admiral's Company. Peele has left behind some half dozen plays, rich in poetic beauty paralleled by none except Marlowe's. **The Arraignment of Paris (c.1584) is supposed to be his earlier work. A kind of romantic comedy**, it contains an elaborate tribute to the Queen and shows great skill in the variation of metre. Less musical than *David and Bathsheba* (1599), it has some striking passages of melodious beauty. **Edward I** (1593), an incoherent chronicle play; **The Old Wives' Tale**, a clever satire on the popular drama of the day; **The Hunting of Cupid**, an earlier play now lost. Peele's poetical works include **Polyhymnia (1590)**, a poem in blank verse, **The Honour of the Garter (1593)**, **The Fall of Troy**.

2. **Robert Greene** (1558-92) too was a student of **St. John's College, Cambridge, and later of Clare Hall, Oxford wherefrom he took his M.A. degree in 1583**. He lived a lecherous life, and his life, which had much promise, came to an end nearly in the bud. Greene was, first of all, a storyteller and a pamphleteer who turned to drama for the lucre it offered. His plays are four in number: **Alphonsus, King of Aragon**, (1587); **Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay** (1589), **Orlando Furioso** (c.1591) and **The Scottish Historie of James the Fourth** (1592). **Alphonsus** is modelled on Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*; **Orlando Furioso (c.1591) has its source in an English translation of Ariosto**; and **The Scottish Historie of James, the Fourth, staged in 1592, is not a historical play**, but has for its theme an imaginary incident of King's life. **Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, the finest of Greene's works is a tale of love of a maid with two men**. It can, to a great extent, be called a document of Elizabethan life. Greene wrote thirty-five prose pieces. They are also important works in that they reveal the author's erratic energy, his quick, malicious wit, and his powerful imagination.

3. **Thomas Kyd** (1558-94), one of the important university wits, was the son of a London Notary and was educated at Merchant Taylor's School. A dramatist and translator, he achieved great popularity with his first work, **The Spanish Tragedy**, which was translated into German and Dutch. **The horrific plot of the play, stuffed with murder, frenzy and sudden death, has gained the play lasting importance and popularity**. While the play bears resemblances of Marlovian lines, *'there are touches of style that dimly foreshadow the great tragical lines of*

Shakespeare. The only other play of Kyd that still survives is **Cornelia** (1593), a translated version of a work of the French Senecan.

- (a) He glorified the matter of the drama by his sweep of imagination as reflected in the stories.
- (b) He vitalized the manner and matter of the drama, as reflected in characterization.
- (c) He clarified and gave coherence to the drama, as reflected in his blank verse.

4. **Thomas Nash (1567-1601).** After completing his education at Cambridge, he went in 1586 to London to earn by writing. He took an active part in the political and personal questions of the day, and his aggressive method took him behind the bars. He finished Marlowe's **The Tragedy of Dido**, but his only surviving play is **Summer's Last Will and Testament**, a satirical masque. Nash also wrote **The Unfortunate Traveller or The Life of Jacke Wilton** (1594), a prose tale that has enough importance in the growth English fiction.
5. **Thomas Lodge (1558-1625)** was educated at both Oxford and Cambridge where he studied law. He, however, gave up his legal studies and took to writing, and while writing, he acted too. Nash produced very little in quantity, and it is assumed that he collaborated with Shakespeare in **Henry VI. The Woundes of Civile War**, a kind of chronicle play, is considered to be Lodge's own work. He also wrote prose romances, the most famous of which is **Rosalynde: Euphues Golden Legacie** (1590) *which was the chief source of Shakespeare's As You Like It.*
6. **John Lyly (1554-1606)** was more famous as a writer of prose than a dramatist proper. The plays of Lyly were written after the publication of Euphues, **the Anatomy of Wit** (1579) and were acted by 'the children of Paul's before her majesty.' His best-known dramas include **Alexander and Campaspe**, played on New Year's Eve in 1581; **Sapho and Phao** (1584); **Endymion** (1591) written around the friendship between the Queen and the Earl of Leicester, and **Midas** (1592). He also wrote two other plays – **The Woman in the Moon** and **Love's Metamorphosis**. Lyly's plays might lack stage effectiveness, but they display the dramatist's superior culture and a fine sense of style. His plays have more kinship with masques than the drama, and the delightful songs that are interpolated in the plays enhance their charm by a great measure. *His dialogues are really admirable at times, happy in clear-cut phrases and allusiveness.*

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE (1564-1593)

Christopher Marlowe was not yet thirty when he dies. Quarrelsome and highly unconventional, his short life was a whirlwind of turbulence and color. **While a student at Cambridge University, he was apparently involved in secret intelligence work for the government.** Because of his hot temper and his taste for political intrigue, he was, throughout his life, constantly in trouble even after he had established himself as a poet and playwright of note. **We know that Marlowe was stabbed to death in a tavern**



brawl, but it is still uncertain as to whether he was killed in a fight over a bill or because of his involvement in undercover political intrigue.

A typical Renaissance man, Marlowe combined a life of action with a career as a scholar and man of letters. Most important to posterity is that he was a poet of genius, his controlled and magnificent writing carrying the stamp of his powerful personality. **His tragic dramas, which center on man's lust for power, are second only to those of Shakespeare.** Marlowe's heroes will their own destruction and are eventually consumed by their insatiable desires. **The construction of Marlowe's plays, his technique of focusing attention on a single prominent character, and, above all, the power and variety which he instilled into dramatic blank verse "the mighty line" so admired by Ben Jonson** – greatly influenced Elizabethan drama and paved the way for the plays of William Shakespeare. Marlowe's influence on his contemporaries is perhaps most vividly revealed by his idyllic pastoral lyric, "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love," which inspired a flood of imitations and replies, among which the best known is that by Sir Walter Raleigh.

His four major plays were written between 1587 and 1593: **Tamburlaine the Great**, parts I and II; **The Jew of Malta**, **The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus**; **Edward II**. **Dido, Queen of Carthage** (with Nashe, 1594) and **The Massacre at Paris** (1593) are attributed to him. His non dramatic poetry is famous for the narrative "**Hero and Leander**", based on the Greek of Masaeus (5th Century AD) and completed by Chapman, and the lyric "**The Passionate Shepherd**". Little else has survived, apart from his translation of **Ovid's Amores (printed 1596)** and of "**The First Book of Lucan**" (printed 1600). It has been suggested without evidence that he had a share in the writing of a number of other plays, including Shakespeare's **Henry VI**, **Titus Andronicus**, and **Richard III**.

Works:

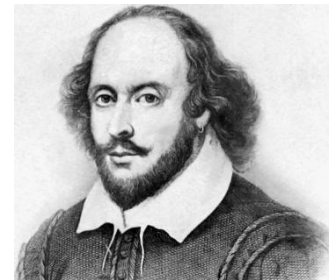
1. Tamburlaine the Great (part I and II)
2. Edward II
3. Dr. Faustus
4. The Jew of Malta
5. Dido, Queen of Carthage

Marlowe was the greatest dramatic writer of 16th century apart from Shakespeare, and the most important influence upon Shakespeare. His importance is due to the energy with which he endowed the blank verse, which in his hands developed an unprecedented suppleness and power. His plays have great intensity, but they show a genius which is epic rather than dramatic at least in **Tamburlaine** and **Faustus** which are his acknowledged masterpieces; his best constructed piece of theater, **Edward II**, is also the least typical of his poetic genius. On the other hand the final scene of **Dr. Faustus** is one of the most intensely dramatic scenes in English literature. **In the musical handling and control of the ten – syllable line, he learned from Spenser, and contributed to Milton as well as to Shakespeare.**

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Birth and Early Years:-

Shakespeare's age is the latter part of the Renaissance, a period in western culture that began during the fourteenth century in Italy. The name Renaissance describes both a renewed interest in ancient Greek and Roman culture and a flourishing of art, literature, and learning inspired by that interest.



One of the most potent ideas was a growing secularism and revival of classical humanism focused interest on this life and held up an ideal that emphasized human possibility. Shakespeare expressed this new attitude in Hamlet: *What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving, how express and admirable in action, how like an angel in apprehension, how like a god!*

William Shakespeare is most definitely the world's most performed and admired . Born in April 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, about 100 miles northwest of London, he was baptized on April 26 at Stanford's Holy Trinity church. As such the actual birth date of Shakespeare is not known but since it was customary to baptize infants within days of birth, and also Shakespeare died on April 23 and most importantly April 23 being St. George's day (the patron Saint of England), it is believed to be on April 23, 1564.

For all his fame and celebration, **William Shakespeare has always been a mysterious figure as far as his personal history is concerned.** There are just two primary sources for information on William Shakespeare i.e. his own works, and various legal and church documents that have survived from Elizabethan times. Naturally, these sources cannot be taken as perfect and they have many gaps in the information which tells us very little about Shakespeare.

Shakespeare's formal education took place in the King's New School, a quarter of a mile from his home. His schoolhouse experiences recur in his play such as In The Merry Wives of Windsor and The Taming of the Shrew (Christopher Sly in The Taming of the Shrew takes the last name of Stephen Sly of Stratford. Sly lives at Burton-on-the-Heath, a village about sixteen miles from Shakespeare's birthplace.)

BIRTH PLACE

Henley St. Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, UK

In the sixteenth century, Stratford-upon-Avon was an important agricultural centre and market town. **The building in Henley Street known today as the 'birthplace' of Shakespeare was actually two adjacent buildings that John Shakespeare purchased at different times and later joined them into one.** There are not renderings of the original buildings.

William's birth preceded by only a few months the most severe outbreak of the bubonic plague in England since Black Death of 1348. On July 1564, the Vicar wrote in his burial register, "*Hic incipit pestis*" [**today the plague begins**].

Now days, there is an exhibition that has been set in Henley street with the name of William Shakespeare; His Life and Background. **The exhibition is open to general visitors.**

EDUCATION

Shakespeare allegedly attended the Stratford Grammar School, which was the centre of major education for sons of prominent citizens at that time. Shakespeare started his education with English alphabets probably from the 'horn book' and later he learned Latin grammar. Although Shakespeare likely had some lessons in English, Latin composition and the study of Latin authors like **Seneca, Cicero, Ovid, Virgil and Horace** would have been the focus of his literary training.

MARRIAGE

On November 28, 1582 Shakespeare got married to Ann Hathaway of Stratford, Daughter of Richard Hathaway of Shottery. Ann was some three months pregnant at the time of marriage and was eight years older than her husband William. Their first daughter, Susanna, was born on May 26, 1583. **The couple later had twins, Hamnet and Judith,** born February 2, 1585 and christened at Holy Trinity. Hamnet died in childhood at the age of 11, on August 11, 1526.

Shakespeare's sorrow at the loss of his only son is undeniably reflected in his later work, and particularly, in a passage from *King John*.

THE LOST YEARS 1586-1592

The only documented evidence of Shakespeare's first twenty-four years are of his baptism, marriage, the baptism of his children. No records survive from the Stratford grammar school for his years there. The period between the birth of the twins and the first record of Shakespeare's success in London is referred to as the "Lost Years". **There is no documentary record of Shakespeare's activities from the birth of the twins, in 1585 until Robert Greene's complaint about him as in 'upstart crow' in 1592.** Biographers have therefore called these the 'lost years'. In fact, there is nothing certain known about him from his birth in 1564 until 1592 except that he was married in 1582, fathered Susanna in 1583 and the twins Judith and Hamnet in 1585, and probably attended Stratford Grammar School.

In any event, we see that Shakespeare was well established in the London theatre world by the end of 1593. **By this time he had probably already written *The Comedy of Errors, Taming of the Shrew, Perhaps Two Gentlemen of Verona, the three parts of Henry VI, Titus Andronicus and perhaps even Richard III.***

Shakespeare's chief rival among early Elizabethan playwrights was **Christopher Marlowe**, who had by this time (he was murdered in 1593) written his Tamburlain plays *Dr. Faustus and The Jew of Malta*. Had Shakespeare died in the same year as Marlowe, his accomplishment would have been thought remarkable, but Marlowe would undoubtedly have been given the precedence as the better of the playwrights by subsequent critics.

Shakespeare in London

Shakespeare came to London at an auspicious time, the dawn of the golden age of English drama. (The first theatre name The Red Lion, was built by John Brayne)

In 1576 Brayne and his brother-in-law James Burbage erected another playhouse name The Theatre. James Burbage, was a carpenter turned actor. In 1587, Philip Henslowe opened another theatre name The Rose on the south side of River Thames.

The Rose became the home of Christopher Marlowe's plays. Here Thomas Kyd staged his immensely popular revenge drama The Spanish Tragedy. Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus and Henry VI trilogy was played by Lord Strange's Men which was staged on the same theatre.

The Non-dramatic Poetry

Venus and Adonis was probably written in 1592 during the period of the theatre closings in London. **It was registered and printed the following year. It bears a somewhat stiff and formal dedication to Henry Wriothsley, Earl of Southampton. Southampton's confessor, the poet Robert Southwell was a distant cousin of Shakespeare.**

Ovid depicted Venus and Adonis as lovers. Shakespeare presents an older, sexually experienced woman trying to seduce a young, prim lad who prefers hunting to lovemaking.

The Rape of Lucrece was probably written in 1593. It was registered and printed in 1594. It bears a much warmer dedication to the same Lord. It was less successful. Both the poems were printed by Richard Field.

The Sonnets were written over a number of years, mostly in all likelihood, from 1591-1594, though some are probably later. The full sequence was first printed by Thomas Thorpe in 1609, along with a longer poem at the end titled **A Lover's Complaint**, seems to be a very early poem (perhaps around 1591), but no date of composition can be assigned.

In 1599, a work title *The Passionate Pilgrim* was attributed to Shakespeare, and in it two of the Sonnets (138 and 144) appeared. Other poems certainly not be Shakespeare appeared in the same volume. **Further, Meres made reference to Shakespeare's sugared sonnets among his private friends in the famous passage from *Palladis Tamia* in 1598.** It is fairly certain that the sequence was complete by 1597 if not earlier.

In 1601, a very fine poem subsequently titled *The Phoenix and the Turtle* appeared untitled as one of the Poetical Essays appeared to Robert Chester's *Love's Martyr; Or Rosalind's Complaint*. It was attributed to Shakespeare, and many scholars have accepted it as genuine. The date of composition is unknown.

Shakespeare's sonnets were parts of a fashion for sonneteering, which peaked in the mid-90s, provoked by the 1591 publication **Sir Philip Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella***.

The Globe Theatre

In December 1598, Richard and Cuthbert Burbage along with their friends dismantled the Theatre and built a new playhouse, The Globe.

On days when a play would be performed, a flag would fly over the theatre, showing Hercules holding the globe and bearing the motto *Totus mundus agit histrionem*: All the world's stage. Major plays of Shakespeare were performed here.

The Lord Chamberlain's Men

Shakespeare established himself once again with the reassembling of the playing companies after the reopening of the theatres in 1594. We find Shakespeare, in December 1594, listed by the Treasurer of the Queen's Chamber along with Will Kemp and Richard Burbage, the great clown and tragedian of the company, as receiving payment for two performances at Greenwich. These three, and four other—John Hemming, eventual co-editor of the First Folio among them—were the charter members of the a new theater company organized under the patronage of **Henry Carey Lord Hunsdon**, Chamberlain to Queen Elizabeth. They were known as the Lord Chamberlain's men. When they performed publicly, it was at The **Theatre, built by James Burbage (father of Richard) in 1576** north of the city. Shakespeare became a share, or householder in the company, i.e. he was now a part owner/manager and as such shared in the profits. This provided him the stability necessary for his most fruitful years, when he, as the company's principal playwright, produced an average of two plays per year until about 1611-1612, when he seems to have retired to Stratford.

Shakespeare must have done a great deal of acting. He is listed by Ben Jonson in Jonson's magnificent *1616 Folio of his Works* as having acted as the chief comedian in *Every Man in His Humour* in 1598.

He was also listed by Jonson as one of the principal tragedians in the 1603 for *Sejanus*.

The History Plays

Henry VI, Part 1

The play begins with a state ceremony: the funeral of King Henry V. There was a heated argument between Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester (brother to Henry V and Lord Protector while King Henry VI was still a legal minor), and Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester.

Meanwhile, in France, Charles the Bastard introduces Joan La Pucelle, “a holy maid”, to the court of King Charles. Back in England, the conflict between Gloucester and Winchester breaks into open fighting between their followers. In France, Lord Talbot returns to the English camp, having been released in an exchange of prisoners. The Countess of Auvergne invites Talbot to visit her and attempts to capture him by locking the door of her castle.

King Henry VI, who has come to France, promotes Talbot to the earldom of Shrewbury. King Henry VI is crowned in Paris, and Talbot disgraces Falstaff publicly for his cowardice at Rouen.

Henry VI, Part 2

The play begins with a state ceremony: the formal reception into England of Queen Margaret by her new husband, King Henry VI. The Duchess of Gloucester urges her husband to “reach at the glorious gold”.

Henry VI, Part 3

The Play begins with the triumphant Yorkists in parliament, having broken in by force while still bloody from their recent victory. Richard displays the severed head of Somerset, which York addresses mockingly.

Major Comedies of Shakespeare

1. **All's Wells That Ends Well (1604 - 05)** – Some critics today consider this play to be one of his Problem Plays, because it can't be classified as tragedy or comedy. This play was originally published in the **First Folio in 1623**. Recently it is argued that **Middleton** collaborated with Shakespeare on this play.
2. **As You Like It** – This is also a pastoral comedy first published in the **First Folio, 1623**. In this play **Rosalind** flees along with her cousin **Celia** and **Touchstone** to find safety and consequently love, in the forest of Arden.

This play is known for its most famous speech. "**All the World's a Stage**".

In this play Duke **Frederick** has usurped the whole kingdom and exiled his elder brother, **Duke Senior**, when he banishes **Rosalind** from the court, all the three leave the kingdom where **Rosalind** disguises as **Ganymede** and **Celia** disguises as **Aliena**.

The source of this play is Thomas Lodge's "**Rosalynde**", the second source is '**The Histories of Orlando Furioso**' by Robert Greene.

*"Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."*



*"Thou art not for the fashion of these times,
Where none will sweat but for promotion."*



*"All the world's a stage
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts
His acts being seven ages".*



*"And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks
Sermons in stones, and good in everything".*

3. **The Comedy Of Errors** – (pub. 1623 in first folio). It is a comedy of mistaken identify and is one of his early plays. It has been adopted for Opera, stage and musical theatre. It is a story of two identical twins who accidentally get separated at the time of birth. **The source of this play is Roman comedies of Plautus. (Menachmi)**
4. **Measure for Measure** – It is a play which deals with the issues of mercy, justice truth and the relationship of pride and humanity. "**Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall**".

It is also a part of the **First Folio of 1623**, it is taken to be a comedy but the over – all impact of the plot defies our expectations as a comedy.

"Is this her fault or mine?

The tempter or the tempted, who sins most"?

5. **The Merchant of Venice** – It is one of the most important and remembered play for its dramatic scenes and for its immortal character, **Shylock** along with **Portia**. Due to his extreme cruelty, **Shylock** became more prominent and famous but the title character is the merchant **Antonio**.

In this play **Bassanio** wishes to marry **Portia** and approaches **Antonio**, for 3000 ducats who has always helped him. Unfortunately **Antonio** didn't have so much money so he tells him to take it from **Shylock** which will be repaid by him. **Shylock** is reluctant in the beginning but agrees upon one condition that if **Antonio** will not repay in time he may take a pound of **Antonio's** flesh.

Antonio's ships are lost at sea and so now **Shylock** is happy to take revenge. In the court, **Shylock** even refuses to take 6000 ducats and demands **Antonio's** flesh. In the mean time **Portia** arrives disguised as a lawyer and asks **Shylock** to show mercy in a famous speech advising him about mercy. **"tis twice blest: It blesseth him that gives and him that takes"** (act IV, scene I). However **Shylock** is adamant and refuses to take any compensation apart from a pound of flesh.

While **Shylock** was preparing his knife, **Portia** told him that the contract allows him only to remove the flesh and not the "blood", otherwise his lands and goods would be forfeited under the Venetian's laws. To every one's surprise **Shylock** is now ready to accept any offer and the law takes its part and forfeit his property half to the government and half to **Antonio**, leaving his life at the mercy of the Duke because **Shylock** attempted to take the life of a citizen. **The Duke**, immediately pardons **Shylock's** life. In the end **Bassanio** comes to know that **Balthazar** was **Portia** and **Antonio** learns from **Portia** that three of his ships have returned safely.

"The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose"



"I am not bound to please thee with my answer"



"How far that little candle throws his beams!

So shines a good deed in a naughty world-"

6. **The Merry Wives of Windsor (1602)** – This is a comedy by Shakespeare which features the character **Sir John Falstaff**, who had previously been featured in **Henry IV (Part I and II)**. Its title is a reference to **Windsor Castle** in **Berkshire, England**.

7. **A Mid Summer Night's Dream** – It is a play which portrays the events surrounding the marriage of the Duke of Athens, **Theseus** and **Hippolyta**. This play is categorized as a comedy and is known to be widely performed across the world.

"The course of true love never did run smooth"



"I ll met by moonlight, proud Titania"

"I ll put a girdle round about the earth

In forty minutes"

"And, as imagination bodies forth

The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen

Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing

A local habitation and a name".

8. **Much Ado About Nothing** – It is considered to be one of the best comedies by Shakespeare which ends with multiple marriages. The story line has two pair of lovers – **Benedick** and **Beatrice** and **Claudio** and **Hero**. This play was included in the **First Folio** published in **1623**.

"Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,

Men were deceivers ever".



"Is it not strange, that sheeps'

guts should hale souls out of men's bodies"?"

"Comparisons are odorous"

9. **Tempest** – The **Tempest** is regarded as Shakespeare's last complete play Critics had enough evidence for the view that **Cymbeline**, **The Winter's Tale**, **The Tempest** and **Pericles** were written towards the end of Shakespeare's career and **The Tempest** is probably the last and the finest of the four. These four plays have been grouped together under the heading of 'romance' because these plays possess the typical features of the romance mode like exile, journey, storms, shipwreck, exotic location, countryside, magic realism and supernatural etc.

Prospero who use to be the **Duke of Milan** was ousted from power by his own brother **Antonio**, because he was rather more interested in the study of the books of magic. Antonio after obtaining this power took help from the **King of Naples** and got success in driving out Prospero from Milan. Antonio along with **Miranda** were placed on a boat, left to the mercy of the wind and the waves. By doing this Antonio had calculated that they would perish in the ocean but luck favoured them and the boat drifted to an island where Prospero and Mirinda landed safely. Prospero continued his study of magic and through this he could control the force of nature. He became so powerful that large number of spirits of air, water, fire and earth began to pay homage to him. And **a spirit called Ariel was the chief** whom Prospero began to employ in his service. After twelve years Prospero got an opportunity to take revenge upon his enemies. Prospero uses his supernatural

powers to cause a storm in the sea when king **Alonso, Ferdinand, Sebastian** and **Antonio** were returning after marriage of Alonso's daughter and as a result of this storm they were cast ashore on Prospero's Island and now all these men were completely on Prospero's mercy. He could have tortured all of them to the cruelest treatment but forgives all the three men and promises to arrange for their safe voyage. He claims his dukedom of which he has been deprived.

"Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows".



*"You taught me language; and my profit on't
For learning me your language!"*

- 10. King Lear** – It is a tragedy in which the title character distributes, his whole estate between two of his three daughters which was based on their flattery and the consequent result was tragic. G.B. Shaw wrote, "**No man will ever write a better tragedy than Lear**".

King Lear wishes to distribute his realm among his three daughters but the distribution depends on who loves him best. So in the process of the proclamation of love, **Cordelia** is honest but blunt which makes King Lear angry and so he disinherits her. **Kent** objects to this unfair treatment and so he was banished from the country. As **Cordelia** was disinherited, the **Duke of Burgundy** refused to marry her but the **King of France** marries her just because of her honesty. Finally the aged king divides his whole kingdom between two daughters **Regan** and **Goneril** and outcasts **Cordelia** for her disloyalty but after some time he came to know that **Regan** and **Goneril** prove to be most disloyal, to had whom he had already given the kingdom. He wanders near the countryside as a poor man until **Cordelia** comes with her husband, the **King of France** to reclaim her father's land. **Regan** and **Gorneil** are defeated, but only after **Cordelia** has been captured and murdered, **King Lear** then dies of grief.

*"I grow, I prosper;
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!"*



*"I want that glib and only art
To speak and purpose not".*



*"How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child!"*



*"O! let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven;
Keep me in temper; I would not be mad"*

- 11. Twelfth Night** – (sub title – **What You Will**) It is a comedy written around 1601 – 02. It is based on a story by **Matteo Bandello**. In this play the ship in which **Violla** was moving got ship wrecked on the coast of **Illyria** and come ashore with the help of a captain. Her twin brother **Sebastian** is believed to be dead. Now **Voilla** disguised herself and renamed as **Cesario**

and with the help of the captain enters in the service of **Duke of Orsino**. The Duke took help of **Cesario** (Violla) as an intermediate to profess his love before Olivia. **Olivia** took **Violla** to be a man and falls in love with **Cesario** while **Violla** fallen in love with the Duke.

Eventually Voilla's brother **Sebestain** who was unharmed in the shipwreck reappears and **Violla's** true identity comes out when members of the court notice the similarities between her and **Sebastian**. **Olivia** quickly falls in love with **Sebastian** and **Violla** confess her love for the **Duke**.

*"But be not afraid of greatness: some men are born great,
Some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them"*

*"If music be the food of love, play on".
"Not to be a bed after midnight is to be up bedtime"*

*"In delay there lies no plenty;
Thjen come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure"*

12. Romeo and Juliet – The two families, the **Montagues** and the **Capulets** live in Verona, Italy amidst a bloody feud. **Romeo** a **Montague**, and **Juliet** a **Capulet**, fall in love and struggle to maintain their relationship. After Romeo kills Juliet's cousin **Iybalt** in a fit of passion, things fall apart. Both lovers eventually commit suicide with minutes and both the families had no other option rather to make peace over their grief.

*"Night's candles are burnt out, and Jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops".*



*"What's in a name? that which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet."*



*"Good – night, good – night! Parting is such sweet sorrow
That I shall say good night till it be morrow".*



"He jests at scars, that never felt a wound"

13. Hamlet – This play has been described as "**the world's most fined story after Cinderella**". It is a tragedy which is set in the kingdom of **Denmark**, where Prince **Hamlet** takes revenge on his uncle **Claudius** for murdering **King Hamlet**. The whole play portrays and explores the theme of revenge, insects, madness, grief and moral corruption.

In this play **Hamlet** seems to delay and delay to achieve his goal which he is not able to achieve due to his brooding nature. Hamlet adopts a device to verify the ghost's story, though even after the confirmation of that story, Hamlet goes on delaying his revenge. Ultimately the revenge is taken and revenge cost the avenger his own life besides the lives of others.

"To be, or not to be: that is the question"



*"The time is out of joint; O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!"*



*"Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy,
For the apparel oft proclaims the man"*



*"Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all"
"I must be cruel only to be kind"*



*"To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause"*



*"O god! I could be bounded in a nut – shell,
And count myself a king of infinite space,
Were it not that I have bad dreams".*



"The rest is silence"



*"There is nothing either good or bad,
But thinking makes it so".*



*"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough – hew them how we will"*

*"How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world".*



*"Lord! we know what we are,
but know not what we may be"*



*"Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow,
Thou shalt not escape calumny"*



*"What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason!
How infinite in faculty! In form, in moving,
How express and admirable! In action how like an angel!
In apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world!"*

The paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust"?

14. Macbeth – *"If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly"*



*"Drink, sir, is a great provoker of three things...
Nose – painting, sleep, and urine.
Lechery, sir, it provokes, and unprovokes;
It provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance".*



*"Nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it".*



*"Now good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both".*



*"There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face".*



*"Macbeth : if we should fail,-
Lady Macbeth: We fail!
But screw your courage to the sticking – place,
And we'll not fail."*

*"Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings"*

15. Othello - *"But yet the pity of it Iago!,
The pity of it, Iago!"*



*"Trifles light as air
Are to the jealous confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ"*



*"He that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed"*

16. Cymbline – *"Boldness be my friend !
Arm me, audacity."*

17. Julius Caesar – *"Cowards die many times before their deaths;
The valiant never taste of death but once".*



*"If I could pray to move, prayers would move me;
But I am constant as the northern star"*



*"But when I tell him he hates flatters,
He says he does being then most flattered"*



"If you have tears, prepare to shed them now".

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER

- 1- **As You Like It** (1599), a sparkling comedy by Shakespeare. Its heroine is sweet and charming Rosalind. The other important well-drawn characters are Jacques and Touchstone. There is no tragic interest in it in the *Merchant of Venice* and in *Much Ado About Nothing* or in *Twelfth Night*. It is the sweetest and happiest of all Shakespeare's comedies.
- 2- **Cymbeline** (1610), one of the last plays by Shakespeare. It is combined with an Italian love-story. We have a husband roused to causeless jealousy of a spotless wife. The well known woman character is Imogen.
- 3- **Hamlet** (1603), one of the four great tragedies of Shakespeare. The plot centre round Hamlet's inability to take action against his uncle who has killed his father and married his mother. It has been variously described as a domestic tragedy, a revenge play, a tragedy of intellectualism, and a tragedy of man caught in the grip of evil. It has been called the 'Mona Lisa' of literature. The character of Hamlet has provoked so much criticism that it is difficult to go into details here. T.S. Eliot says that 'probably more people have thought Hamlet a work of art because they found it interesting, than have found it interesting because it is a work of art. As a work of art, in the opinion of T.S. Eliot Hamlet is an artistic failure.
- 4- **Henry IV, Part I and Part II** (1598); **Henry V**; **Henry VI** (1592- 99), historical plays by Shakespeare, based on Holinshed's Chronicle. The most important character is that of Falstaff who has become immortal in English literature by his rollicking humour.
- 5- **Julius Caesar** (1599), a famous historical play by Shakespeare, and one of the most vital political plays of the world. It provides in Brutus one of the noblest character in drama. The play gives us one of the great mob scenes of the theatre.
- 6- **King Lear** (1606), one of the four great tragedies by Shakespeare. The story of Lear and his daughter is given by Geoffrey of Monmouth and by Holinshed. According to A. Nicoll, "Lear is one of the greatest of all works of genius; as a dramatic poem it has never been surpassed, even it as a drama it has many weaknesses and blemishes.
- 7- **Love's Labour Lost** (1595), one of the early comedies by Shakespeare. It is a clever play; but it is not great. It has very little action or intrigue. "Its structure is artificial and mechanical, much of its humour decidedly superficial."
- 8- **Macbeth** (1606), one of the four great tragedies by Shakespeare. It is a tragedy of ambition and retribution. It shows the corrupting force of evil, but at the same time it affirms that good may be reborn out of the evil. The structure of Macbeth is not so fine as that of *Othello*, yet remains one of the greatest tragedies of all time.
- 9- **Merchant of Venice, The** (1596), the first great romantic comedy of Shakespeare. It is a monument of Portia's loving wit, Antonio's friendship and Shylock's cruel and perfectly natural hatred. The plot of the play centres round three episodes- the bond tale, the casket tale, and the Jessica tale.

- 10- *Midsummer Night's Dream*** **The** (1595 or 1596), the crowning comedy of Shakespeare's youthful period. It has the famous character of Puck. The whole play is surcharged with supernatural and ethereal atmosphere. With its songs and dances and spectacular effects, it is almost more of a masque or opera than a comedy in the strict sense of the word.
- 11- *Much Ado About Nothing*** (1598-8), a popular comedy by Shakespeare, based on an Italian tale. For the main story Shakespeare is indebted to Bandello, but he has added the fascinating figures of Benedick and Beatrice. The comedy is full of brilliant and sparkling wit.
- 12- *Othello*** (1604), a powerful tragedy by Shakespeare. It ranks with *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *King Lear*. It is a remarkable study in suspicion and Jealousy, which lead Othello to murder his innocent wife Desdemona. The villain of the play is Iago. Othello is Shakespeare's nearest approach to domestic tragedy. It is "the most painfully exciting and the most terrible" of Shakespeare's plays.
- 13- *Richard II* (1595), *Richard III* (1594)**, two historical plays by Shakespeare. The chief interest of the first play lies in the contrast between King Richard II and Bolingbroke. King Richard's character has been presented both in its weakness and in its merits. In *Richard III*, Shakespeare finds himself with a tragic hero who has all the traits of the conventional Senecanism. *Richard II* is more lyrical than *Richard III*, and it contains many poetical passages.
- 14- *Romeo and Juliet*** (1595), a romantic love tragedy by Shakespeare. "Its lyrical passion at times rises to the heights of ecstasy. This tragedy is obviously a young man's effort and shows the fullness of Renaissance thought and passion.
- 15- *Tempest*** **The** (1611), the last play of Shakespeare. It is a dramatic romance mingled with fairy lore, magic and supernaturalism. The chief character is Prospero who acts as Providence in the play. The romantic young pair consists of Ferdinand and Miranda. The theme of the play is forgiveness and Liberty. The wrongs are redressed and losses restored. The play contains two unusual characters Ariel and Caliban.
- 16- *Twelfth Night or That You Will*** (1601), a famous romantic comedy by Shakespeare based on the eternal triangle of love. The main characters are the Duke, Olivia, and Viola. The Duke loves Olivia, Olivia loves Viola (disguised as Cesario), and Viola
- 17-** loves the Duke. Another important character is Malvolia who is the main source of humour in the play, as he is made the butt of all the fun. Feste, the Clown, is the soul of this musical comedy.
- 18- *Winter's Tale, The*** (1609-10), one of the last dramatic romances of Shakespeare. It is based on Robert Greene's *Pandosto*.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Who wrote Hero and Leander ?
 (a) Shakespeare (b) Marlowe (c) Chapman (d) Sidney
2. The Four P's by John Heywood is a
 (a) miracle play (b) morality play (c) interlude (d) mystery play
3. Ralph Roister Doister, the first regular English comedy is modeled after
 (a) Seneca (b) French (c) Plautus (d) Terence
4. Gorboduc, or Ferrex and Porrex was written by Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville in
 (a) 1558 (b) 1560 (c) 1562 (d) 1564
5. Lyly's Endymion is an elaborate compliment to Queen Elizabeth, who appears in the character of
 (a) Helen (b) Elizabeth (c) Mary (d) Cynthia
6. Which was Marlowe's first play ?
 (a) Jew of Malta (b) Edward II (c) Dr. Faust us (d) Tamburlaine
7. Was this the face that launched a thousand ships/And burnt the topless towers of Illion?
 Where do these lines appear ?
 (a) Dr. Faustus (b) Edward II (c) Tamburlaine (d) Jew of Malta
8. Who is the Jew of Malta ?
 (a) Antonio (b) Barabas (c) Falstaff (d) Shylock
9. Marlowe died in 1593 at the age
 (a) Twenty nine (b) Thirty (c) Thirty one (d) Thirty two
10. The Spanish Tragedy (1590) Thomas Kyd is a
 (a) tragedy of blood (b) heroic play
 (c) tragi-comedy (d) historical play
11. Who wrote Friar Bacon and Frit Bungay?
 (a) George Peele (b) Robert Greene
 (c) Thomas Lodge (d) Thomas Nashe
12. Who is the author of The OI Wives' Tale ?
 (a) George Peele (b) Robert Greene
 (c) Thomas Lodge (d) Thomas Nashe
13. Shakespeare belonged to
 (a) London (b) Southampton (c) Stratford (d) Coventry
14. The Theatre was pulled down an rebuilt as
 (a) Black friars (b) The Theatre (c) The Globe (d) Avon
15. How many plays did Shakespeare write?
 (a) Thirty three (b) Thirty five (c) Thirty seven (d) Thirty nine

16. Who wrote the two long poems Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece?
 (a) Sidney (b) Keats (c) Marlowe (d) Shakespeare
17. In which play of Shakespeare does Hippolyta appear ?
 (a) Titus Andronicus (b) The Tempest
 (c) A Midsummer Night's Dream (d) Much Ado About Nothing
18. Shakespeare's Julius Caesar was modelled after
 (a) Historical Truth (b) Thomas North's translation of Plutarch
 (c) Holinshed's Chronicles (d) Boccaccio's Decameron
19. Which play of Shakespeare is a "conversation play" ?
 (a) Much Ado About Nothing (b) Comedy of Errors
 (c) Two Gentlemen of Verona (d) Love's Labour's Lost
20. In which Shakespearean play do the characters Beatrice and Benedick appear?
 (a) All's Well That Ends Well (b) Much Ado About Nothing
 (c) Measure for Measure (d) Twelfth Night
21. Which of the following is a dark comedy?
 (a) Taming of the Shrew (b) The Merry Wives of Windsor
 (c) All's Well That Ends Well (d) Measure for Measure
22. Where do we find the clown Feste?
 (a) Two Gentlemen of Verona (b) Twelfth Night
 (c) Taming of the Shrew (d) A Winter's Tale
23. Match the heroines and their plays
- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| (a) Portia | 1. As You Like it |
| (b) Viola | 2. The Tempest |
| (c) Rosalind | 3. Twelfth Night |
| (d) Miranda | 4. Merchant of Venice |

Codes:

	a	b	c	d		a	b	c	d
(A)	4	3	1	2	(B)	4	2	1	3
(C)	1	3	4	2	(D)	3	2	1	4

24. In which Shakespearean play do we come across Rosencrantz and Guildenstern ?
 (a) A Midsummer Night's Dream (b) King Lear
 (c) Hamlet (d) The Tempest
25. Match the protagonists and their tragic flaws.
- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| (a) King Lear | 1. arrogance |
| (b) Hamlet | 2. Indecision |
| (c) Othello | 3. Jealousy |
| (d) Macbeth | 4. Ambition |

Codes:

	a	b	c	d		a	b	c	d
(A)	4	3	1	2	(B)	1	2	3	4
(C)	1	3	4	2	(D)	3	2	1	4

26. The ghost of Banquo appears in
 (a) King Lear (b) Hamlet (c) Macbeth (d) Othello
27. What is the subtitle of Pericles ?
 (a) Prince of Tyre (b) The Great Prince
 (c) Prince of Princes (d) Prince of Arden
28. Which Shakespearean play was performed at the wedding of Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James I, to Frederick, Elector Palatine in 1613 ?
 (a) Cymbeline (b) A Winter's Tale
 (c) The Tempest (d) Coriolanus
29. In which chronicle play did Shakespeare collaborate with Fletcher?
 (a) Henry IV (b) Henry V (c) Henry VIII (d) Richard II
30. When did Shakespeare die ?
 (a) 1614 (b) 1615 (c) 1616 (d) 1617
31. Whom did Charles Lamb call "a prose Shakespeare"?
 (a) Thomas Heywood (b) Thomas Middleton
 (c) Thomas Dekker (d) Thomas Kyd
32. What is the first collected edition of Shakespearean plays called ?
 (a) First Edition (b) First Folio
 (c) Folio One (d) First Collection
33. How many sonnets did Shakespeare write ?
 (a) 153 (b) 154 (c) 155 (d) 156
34. In which Shakespearean play do we find the prankster Puck ?
 (a) Taming of the Shrew (b) Twelfth Night
 (c) A Midsummer Night's Dream (d) As You Like it
35. When were Shakespeare's sonnets published ?
 (a) 1609 (b) 1611 (c) 1612 (d) 1616
36. Match the protagonists and their beloveds
 (a) Hamlet 1. Ophelia
 (b) Othello 2. Desdemona
 (c) Bassanio 3. Portia
 (d) Titania 4. Oberon
- Codes:**
- | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|-----|---|---|---|---|
| | a | b | c | d | | a | b | c | d |
| (A) | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | (B) | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| (C) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | (D) | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 |
37. "Full fathom five thy father lies."
 Where do we find these lines ?
 (a) The Tempest (b) A Midsummer Night's Dream
 (c) Taming of the Shrew (d) A Winter's Tale

38. In which of following plays Shakespeare do we find a ghost
 (a) Richard II (b) Cymbeline
 (c) A Midsummer Night's Dream (d) Antony and Cleopatra
39. If it be true that "good wine need no bush", 'tis true that a good play needs no epilogue. Which play are we talking about
 (a) Much Ado About Nothing (b) As You Like It
 (c) Merchant of Venice (d) Julius Caesar
40. Cowards die many times before their deaths, The valiant never taste of death but once. Which play contains these famous lines?
 (a) Hamlet (b) Richard II (c) Macbeth (d) Julius Caesar
41. The time is out of joint; O cursed-spite. That ever I was born to set it right. Where do these lines figure ?
 (a) Macbeth (b) Othello (c) Hamlet (d) King Lear
42. What is the name of Shylock's daughter in Merchant of Venice ?
 (a) Portia (b) Leah (c) Jessica (d) Rebecca
43. Which of the following is Marlowe's last play ?
 (a) Tamburlaine (b) Jew of Malta (c) Edward II (d) Dr Faustus
44. Who is the shrew in Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew ?
 (a) Katharina (b) Lavinia (c) Titania (d) Annabella
45. Which is the first play of Marlowe that established his "mighty line" ?
 (a) Tamburlaine (b) Jew of Malta (c) Edward II (d) Dr Faustus
46. Why, this is hell, nor am I out it Thinkst
 thou that I who saw the face of God,
 And tasted the eternal joys of Heaven,
 Am not tormented with ten thousand hells
 In being depriv'd of everlasting bliss
- These lines are spoken by*
 (a) Satan in Paradise Lost (b) Mephistophilis in Doctor Faustus
 (c) Macbeth In Macbeth (d) Satan in Paradise Regained
47. Everyman is the title of a
 (a) Morality (b) Mystery
 (c) Religious Lyric (d) A sermon by Donne
48. Johnson's phrase about Shakespeare's "Fatal Cleopatra" refers to his
 (a) fondness for similes (b) fondness for puns
 (c) lore of allusions (d) neglect of "the unities"
49. The soliloquy beginning with Thou, Nature, art my goddess is spoken by
 (a) The bastard in King Lear (b) The bastard in King John
 (c) Caliban in The Tempest (d) Sir John Falstaff in Henry IV

ANSWERS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
B	C	C	C	D	D	A	B	A	A

11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
B	A	C	C	C	D	C	B	D	B

21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
C, D	B	A	C	B	C	A	C	C	C

31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
A	B	B	C	A	C	A	B	B	D

41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49
C	C	C	A	A	B	A	B	A