



# JKPSC

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## School Lecturer

Jammu & Kashmir Public Service Commission

**ENGLISH**

**Volume - 3**



# **JKPSC - School Lecturer** **(English)**

<b>Unit – V Literary Theory and Criticism</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>Classical Greek Criticism</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Neo-Classical Criticism</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Romantic Criticism</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Victorian Criticism</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>New Criticism</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Post-Structuralist Criticism</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Feminist Criticism</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Postcolonial Criticism</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Key Theorists and Their Impact</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Interdisciplinary Connections</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Contemporary Applications of Literary Criticism</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Synthesis and Comparative Analysis</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Unit – VI Indian English Literature and American Literature</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>Early Pioneers of Indian English Literature</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Women’s Voices in Indian English Literature</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Contemporary Novelists in Indian English Literature</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Poetry and Drama in Indian English Literature</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>19th-Century Foundations of American Literature</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Modernist Prose in American Literature</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>African American Voices in American Literature</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Poetry and Gender in American Literature</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Drama and Social Critique in American Literature</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Historical and Cultural Contexts</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Comparative Analysis</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Contemporary Relevance and Global Impact</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Unit – VII Grammar/Literary Devices</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>Tenses</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Syntax</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Collocation</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Punctuation</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Articles</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Narration (Direct &amp; Indirect)</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Error Spotting</b>	<b>165</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Spellings</b>	<b>170</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>One-Word Substitution</b>	<b>175</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Homophones And Homonyms</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Alliteration</b>	<b>184</b>

<b>12</b>	<b>Pun</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Assonance And Consonance</b>	<b>194</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Paradox</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Hyperbole</b>	<b>204</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>Conceit</b>	<b>208</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Simile and Metaphor</b>	<b>213</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Oxymoron</b>	<b>218</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>Onomatopoeia</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>Irony</b>	<b>228</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>Allusion</b>	<b>232</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>Apostrophe And Anaphora</b>	<b>237</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>Epigram</b>	<b>242</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>Antithesis and Chiasmus</b>	<b>246</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>Personification</b>	<b>251</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>Imagery</b>	<b>256</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>Symbolism</b>	<b>261</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>Metonymy</b>	<b>265</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>Euphemism</b>	<b>270</b>

# V UNIT

## Literary Theory and Criticism

### Classical Greek Criticism

#### Introduction

Classical Greek Criticism, emerging in the 5th and 4th centuries BCE, represents the foundation of Western literary theory, establishing concepts that have shaped critical discourse for centuries. Centered in Athens during its Golden Age, this critical tradition is defined by the contributions of **Plato** (c. 427–347 BCE), **Aristotle** (384–322 BCE), and **Longinus** (1st or 3rd century CE, attribution debated), whose works address the nature, purpose, and effects of literature. Plato's philosophical dialogues, particularly *The Republic* and *Ion*, critique poetry's moral and epistemological value, introducing the concept of **mimesis** (imitation). Aristotle's *Poetics* offers a systematic analysis of tragedy, comedy, and epic poetry, emphasizing **catharsis**, **plot structure**, and **unity of action**. Longinus's *On the Sublime* explores the emotional and aesthetic power of literature, defining the **sublime** as a quality of transcendent greatness. These thinkers responded to the cultural, political, and intellectual vibrancy of ancient Greece, where poetry, drama, and rhetoric were central to civic life. Their ideas influenced subsequent critical traditions, from Roman criticism to modern formalism, making Classical Greek Criticism a cornerstone of literary studies.

#### 1. Historical and Theoretical Context

##### 1.1 Ancient Greece: Political and Cultural Landscape

- **Political Dynamics:**
  - The **Greek city-states**, particularly Athens, thrived in the 5th century BCE, post-**Persian Wars (490–479 BCE)**, fostering democracy under **Pericles** (c. 495–429 BCE). This political stability enabled cultural flourishing, reflected in Plato's dialogues and Aristotle's *Poetics*, relevant for JKPSC's historical context questions.
  - The **Peloponnesian War (431–404 BCE)** between Athens and Sparta created social tensions, influencing Plato's critique of poetry's moral impact in *The Republic*, key for understanding political influences on criticism.
  - The **Macedonian conquest** under **Philip II** and **Alexander the Great** (336–323 BCE) shifted Greek culture, providing a backdrop for Aristotle's systematic theories, crucial for exam geopolitical analysis.
  - **Athenian democracy**, with its emphasis on public discourse, shaped the rhetorical context of literary criticism, as seen in Longinus's focus on persuasive sublimity, relevant for political theory questions.
- **Cultural and Artistic Flourishing:**
  - The **Golden Age of Athens** saw the rise of **tragedy** (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides) and **comedy** (Aristophanes), central to Plato's and Aristotle's analyses, reflected in *Poetics*'s focus on drama, key for JKPSC's cultural context questions.
  - **Festivals like the Dionysia**, showcasing plays, made literature a public art, influencing Aristotle's emphasis on audience response (catharsis), crucial for sociological analysis.

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- **Oral tradition**, with Homeric epics (Iliad, Odyssey), informed Plato's mimesis and Longinus's sublime, relevant for literary history questions.
  - **Rhetorical schools**, led by Sophists like Gorgias, shaped Longinus's stylistic focus, key for cultural discourse analysis.

## 1.2 Intellectual and Philosophical Climate

### • Philosophical Foundations:

- **Socratic method**, developed by Socrates (c. 470–399 BCE), influenced Plato's dialectical approach in The Republic, questioning poetry's truth, central to JKPSC's philosophical context questions.
- **Plato's Idealism**, emphasizing Forms, shaped his view of poetry as a flawed imitation, as in Ion, key for metaphysical analysis.
- **Aristotle's empiricism**, contrasting Plato, focused on observable structures, as in Poetics's analysis of tragedy, crucial for epistemological questions.
- **Hellenistic philosophy**, post-Aristotle, influenced Longinus's aesthetic focus, relevant for intellectual history analysis.

### • Literary and Aesthetic Developments:

- **Greek drama**, with Sophocles' Oedipus Rex and Euripides' Medea, provided Aristotle's examples, shaping Poetics, key for JKPSC's literary history questions.
- **Epic tradition**, with Homer, informed Plato's critique of narrative and Aristotle's epic analysis, relevant for narrative theory analysis.
- **Rhetorical theory**, with Isocrates, influenced Longinus's On the Sublime, crucial for stylistic analysis.
- **Philosophical dialogues**, Plato's form, set a precedent for critical discourse, key for theoretical form questions.

## 1.3 Socio-Cultural Developments

### • Athenian Society:

- **Democratic ethos**, with citizen participation, fostered public art, reflected in Aristotle's audience focus, relevant for JKPSC's cultural analysis.
- **Education system**, emphasizing rhetoric and poetry, shaped Plato's concerns about moral influence, key for cultural discourse.
- **Religious festivals**, like the Dionysia, integrated literature into civic life, crucial for sociological questions.

### • Role of Literature:

- **Poetry as education**, with rhapsodes reciting Homer, prompted Plato's Ion critique, relevant for social history analysis.
- **Drama as civic mirror**, with tragedies addressing moral dilemmas, informed Aristotle's catharsis, crucial for cultural role questions.
- **Sublime as transcendence**, Longinus's focus, elevated literature's emotional power, key for aesthetic analysis.

## 1.4 Key Historical Events

### • Persian Wars (490–479 BCE):

- Enabled Athenian cultural rise, shaping Plato's context.

### • Peloponnesian War (431–404 BCE):

- Influenced Plato's moral critique.

- **Aristotle's Poetics (c. 335 BCE):**
  - Systematic literary theory.
- **Hellenistic Period (323–31 BCE):**
  - Contextualized Longinus's sublime.
- **Dionysia Festival (5th century BCE):**
  - Shaped drama's role.

### 1.5 Cultural Shifts

- **Philosophical Inquiry:** Truth, morality.
- **Literary Formalization:** Tragedy, epic.
- **Aesthetic Elevation:** Sublime, catharsis.
- **Civic Art:** Public engagement.

**Table 1: Key Historical Events and Their Critical Impact**

Event	Date	Description	Critical Impact
Persian Wars	490–479 BCE	Athenian rise	Plato's philosophical context
Peloponnesian War	431–404 BCE	Social tensions	Plato's moral critique
Poetics	c. 335 BCE	Aristotle's theory	Systematic criticism
Hellenistic Period	323–31 BCE	Cultural shift	Longinus's sublime
Dionysia Festival	5th century BCE	Dramatic showcase	Aristotle's drama focus

## 2. Key Concepts and Theorists

### 2.1 Plato (c. 427–347 BCE)

- **Biography:**
  - Athenian philosopher, student of Socrates, founded Academy.
  - Key texts: The Republic, Ion, Phaedrus.
- **Mimesis (Imitation):**
  - Concept: Art as imitation of reality, thrice removed from truth (Forms).
  - The Republic Book X: Poetry misleads, lacks truth.
  - Impact: Questions art's value, influences moral criticism.
  - Exam relevance: Mimesis, art's ethics.
- **Critique of Poetry:**
  - Ion: Poets lack knowledge, inspired by divine madness.
  - Phaedrus: Rhetoric's persuasive power, danger of art.
  - Significance: Challenges literature's authority, shapes philosophical criticism.
- **Critical Reception:**
  - Influenced Neo-Platonism, Renaissance criticism.
  - JKPSC focus: Mimesis, moral critique.

### 2.2 Aristotle (384–322 BCE)

- **Biography:**
  - Student of Plato, tutor to Alexander, founded Lyceum.
  - Key text: Poetics.
- **Poetics and Tragedy:**
  - Concept: Tragedy as imitation of serious action, evoking catharsis.
  - Elements: Plot, character, thought, diction, spectacle, song.
  - Poetics: Unity of action, time, place; hamartia (tragic flaw).
  - Impact: Formalizes literary analysis, influences dramatic theory.
  - Exam relevance: Catharsis, tragedy, unities.

- **Epic and Comedy:**
  - Epic: Grand narrative, less unified than tragedy.
  - Comedy: Imitation of inferior actions, lost sections.
  - Significance: Broadens critical scope, shapes genre theory.
- **Critical Reception:**
  - Dominant in Renaissance, Neo-Classicism.
  - JKPSC focus: Plot, catharsis, tragedy.

## 2.3 Longinus (1st/3rd Century CE)

- **Biography:**
  - Attributed author, debated identity, Hellenistic scholar.
  - Key text: On the Sublime.
- **Sublime:**
  - Concept: Grandeur of thought, emotion, style elevating literature.
  - Sources: Noble diction, imagery, passion.
  - On the Sublime: Sappho, Homer as exemplars.
  - Impact: Shifts focus to aesthetic experience, influences Romanticism.
  - Exam relevance: Sublime, emotional impact.
- **Stylistic Analysis:**
  - Emphasizes rhetorical power, figurative language.
  - Significance: Aesthetic criticism, emotional resonance.
- **Critical Reception:**
  - Rediscovered in 17th century, shaped Burke, Kant.
  - JKPSC focus: Sublime, style.

**Table 2: Key Theorists and Concepts**

Theorist	Key Text	Concepts	Impact
Plato	The Republic	Mimesis, moral critique	Philosophical criticism
Aristotle	Poetics	Catharsis, tragedy, unities	Formalist theory
Longinus	On the Sublime	Sublime, emotional power	Aesthetic criticism

## 3. Critical Techniques and Applications

### 3.1 Plato's Techniques

- **Dialectical Critique:**
  - Socratic questioning in Ion, challenging poetic authority.
  - Application: Moral evaluation of texts.
- **Mimetic Analysis:**
  - Assessing art's distance from truth in The Republic.
  - Application: Epistemological critique.

### 3.2 Aristotle's Techniques

- **Structural Analysis:**
  - Plot as soul of tragedy in Poetics, unity of action.
  - Application: Dramatic form evaluation.
- **Cathartic Effect:**
  - Emotional purging via tragedy, audience focus.
  - Application: Psychological impact study.

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### 3.3 Longinus's Techniques

- **Sublime Evaluation:**
  - Assessing grandeur in On the Sublime, emotional intensity.
  - Application: Aesthetic analysis.
- **Rhetorical Stylistics:**
  - Analyzing diction, imagery for effect.
  - Application: Stylistic critique.

### 4. Themes and Critical Perspectives

#### 4.1 Major Themes

- **Mimesis and Truth:**
  - Plato's imitation critique, Aristotle's representation.
- **Morality and Art:**
  - Plato's ethical concerns, Aristotle's catharsis.
- **Aesthetic Experience:**
  - Longinus's sublime, Aristotle's pleasure.
- **Structure and Form:**
  - Aristotle's unities, Plato's narrative critique.

#### 4.2 Critical Perspectives

- **Philosophical Criticism:**
  - Plato's epistemological focus.
- **Formalist Criticism:**
  - Aristotle's structural analysis.
- **Aesthetic Criticism:**
  - Longinus's sublime theory.
- **Moral Criticism:**
  - Plato's ethical evaluation.

### Objective Question Bank

#### 1. Who is the author of Poetics?

- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| A) Plato    | B) Aristotle |
| C) Longinus | D) Socrates  |

**Answer:** B) Aristotle

**Explanation:** Aristotle's Poetics defines tragedy.

#### 2. What is Plato's concept of mimesis?

- |                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| A) Emotional purging | B) Imitation of reality |
| C) Sublime grandeur  | D) Unity of action      |

**Answer:** B) Imitation of reality

**Explanation:** Mimesis critiques art's truth.

#### 3. What does Aristotle's catharsis involve?

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| A) Moral critique   | B) Emotional purging  |
| C) Rhetorical style | D) Divine inspiration |

**Answer:** B) Emotional purging

**Explanation:** Catharsis is tragedy's effect.



#### 4. What is Longinus's sublime?

- A) Plot structure
- B) Grandeur of thought
- C) Tragic flaw
- D) Imitative art

**Answer:** B) Grandeur of thought

**Explanation:** Sublime elevates literature.

#### Timeline: Classical Greek Criticism Milestones

Year	Event	Significance
c. 380 BCE	Plato's The Republic	Mimesis critique
c. 360 BCE	Plato's Ion	Poetic inspiration
c. 335 BCE	Aristotle's Poetics	Tragedy theory
c. 1st CE	Longinus's On the Sublime	Sublime aesthetics

#### Conclusion

This chapter on Classical Greek Criticism, focusing on Plato, Aristotle, and Longinus, provides an exhaustive, profoundly detailed, and expansively comprehensive resource for JKPSC exam preparation., and reliable, equipping candidates to tackle any question in India's highest-level objective exams.

### Neo-Classical Criticism

#### Introduction

Neo-Classical Criticism, flourishing in the 17th and 18th centuries, represents a pivotal phase in Western literary theory, emphasizing reason, order, decorum, and adherence to classical rules derived from ancient Greek and Roman models. Rooted in the cultural and intellectual shifts of the **Restoration** (1660–1700) and **Augustan Age** (1700–1745) in England, as well as the French classical tradition, this school sought to regulate literary production through rational principles, drawing heavily on Aristotle's Poetics and Horace's Ars Poetica. Key figures include **John Dryden** (1631–1700), **Alexander Pope** (1688–1744), and **Samuel Johnson** (1709–1784) in England, alongside French neoclassicists like **Pierre Corneille** (1606–1684) and **Nicolas Boileau** (1636–1711). Dryden's An Essay of Dramatic Poesy (1668) defends English drama while advocating balance, Pope's An Essay on Criticism (1711) codifies poetic rules, and Johnson's Preface to Shakespeare (1765) blends admiration with critical rigor. French neoclassicism, exemplified by Boileau's L'Art poétique (1674), prioritized strict adherence to the **unities** (time, place, action) and **decorum**. This criticism responded to the political stability of the Restoration, the rise of Enlightenment rationalism, and the cultural prestige of classical antiquity, shaping literary standards across Europe. Its principles—clarity, restraint, and moral purpose—continue to influence formalist and structuralist criticism, making Neo-Classical Criticism essential for literary studies.

#### 1. Historical and Theoretical Context

##### 1.1 17th- and 18th-Century England and Europe

##### • Political Dynamics:

- The **Restoration of 1660**, reinstating Charles II, stabilized England after the **English Civil War (1642–1651)**, fostering a cultural revival reflected in Dryden's defense of English drama in An Essay of Dramatic Poesy, relevant for JKPSC's political context questions.
- The **Glorious Revolution (1688)** established a constitutional monarchy under William III and Mary II, promoting order and reason, aligning with Pope's An Essay on Criticism's structured aesthetic, key for understanding political influences on criticism.

- The **Augustan Age**, named for Rome's Golden Age under Augustus, saw England emulate classical ideals, as seen in Johnson's Preface to Shakespeare, crucial for exam geopolitical analysis.
- **French absolutism**, under Louis XIV (r. 1643–1715), centralized cultural production, influencing Boileau's rigid rules in *L'Art poétique*, relevant for comparative political questions.
- The **Treaty of Utrecht (1713)**, ending the War of the Spanish Succession, stabilized Europe, fostering intellectual exchange reflected in Pope's and Johnson's cosmopolitan criticism, key for political stability analysis.
- **Cultural and Artistic Developments:**
  - The **Restoration theatre**, with reopened playhouses, popularized heroic drama and comedy of manners, prompting Dryden's critical essays, as in *Of Heroic Plays* (1672), key for JKPS's cultural context questions.
  - **Augustan literature**, with poets like Pope and Swift, emulated classical forms, reflected in *An Essay on Criticism's* poetic rules, crucial for literary history analysis.
  - **French classical drama**, with Corneille's tragedies and Molière's comedies, set standards for Boileau's neoclassical principles, relevant for comparative literature questions.
  - **Coffee house culture**, emerging in London, fostered literary debates, influencing Johnson's *The Rambler* essays, key for cultural discourse analysis.
  - **Royal Society (founded 1660)**, promoting scientific inquiry, shaped the rationalist ethos of neoclassical criticism, as seen in Dryden's balanced critiques, crucial for intellectual history questions.

## 1.2 Intellectual and Philosophical Climate

- **Enlightenment Rationalism:**
  - The **Enlightenment**, with thinkers like Locke (*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690) and Descartes, emphasized reason, influencing Pope's *An Essay on Criticism's* clarity and Dryden's rational arguments, central to JKPS's philosophical context questions.
  - **Empiricism**, championed by Bacon and Locke, shaped Johnson's practical criticism in *Lives of the Poets*, key for epistemological analysis.
  - **French rationalism**, with Descartes's *Discourse on Method* (1637), informed Boileau's systematic rules, crucial for theoretical framework questions.
  - **Classical revival**, inspired by Renaissance humanism, revered Greek and Roman models, reflected in Corneille's adherence to Aristotle, relevant for intellectual history analysis.
- **Literary and Aesthetic Foundations:**
  - **Aristotle's Poetics**, rediscovered in the Renaissance, provided the unities and decorum, adopted by Boileau and Dryden, key for JKPS's literary history questions.
  - **Horace's Ars Poetica**, emphasizing *utile et dulce* (instruction and delight), shaped Pope's and Johnson's moral aesthetics, relevant for aesthetic theory analysis.
  - **Renaissance criticism**, with Sidney's *An Apology for Poetry* (1595), influenced Dryden's defense of drama, crucial for critical lineage questions.
  - **French Academy (founded 1635)**, standardizing literature, set a model for Boileau's *L'Art poétique*, key for institutional influence analysis.

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### 1.3 Socio-Cultural Developments

- **Restoration and Augustan Society:**
  - **Courtly culture**, under Charles II, patronized theatre, prompting Dryden's critical essays, relevant for JKPSC's cultural analysis.
  - **Middle-class growth**, with trade expansion, broadened readership, influencing Pope's accessible style, key for cultural discourse.
  - **Public sphere**, with coffee houses and periodicals, fostered Johnson's moral essays, crucial for sociological questions.
- **Role of Criticism:**
  - **Literary regulation**, with rules and decorum, standardized taste, as in Boileau's prescriptions, relevant for social history analysis.
  - **Moral instruction**, emphasized by Johnson, aligned literature with ethics, crucial for cultural role questions.
  - **Aesthetic judgment**, with Pope's wit, elevated criticism's artistry, key for aesthetic analysis.

### 1.4 Key Historical Events

- **Restoration (1660):**
  - Shaped Dryden's critical context.
- **Publication of An Essay of Dramatic Poesy (1668):**
  - Critical milestone.
- **Glorious Revolution (1688):**
  - Influenced Pope's order.
- **Publication of An Essay on Criticism (1711):**
  - Poetic rules codified.
- **Publication of Preface to Shakespeare (1765):**
  - Balanced critique.

### 1.5 Cultural Shifts

- **Rational Aesthetics:** Reason, clarity.
- **Classical Emulation:** Greek, Roman models.
- **Moral Purpose:** Instruction, delight.
- **Literary Regulation:** Rules, decorum.

**Table 1: Key Historical Events and Their Critical Impact**

Event	Date	Description	Critical Impact
Restoration	1660	Charles II's return	Dryden's dramatic critique
An Essay of Dramatic Poesy	1668	Published	Balanced criticism
Glorious Revolution	1688	Constitutional monarchy	Pope's ordered aesthetic
An Essay on Criticism	1711	Published	Poetic rules
Preface to Shakespeare	1765	Published	Shakespearean critique

## 2. Key Concepts and Theorists

### 2.1 John Dryden (1631–1700)

- **Biography:**
  - English poet, critic, playwright, Poet Laureate.
  - Key texts: An Essay of Dramatic Poesy, Of Heroic Plays.

- 
- **Dramatic Criticism:**
    - Concept: Defends English drama's irregularity vs. French unities.
    - An Essay of Dramatic Poesy: Compares Shakespeare and Jonson, advocates balance.
    - Impact: Promotes national pride, influences critical flexibility.
    - Exam relevance: English drama, unities.
  - **Heroic Drama:**
    - Of Heroic Plays: Defends rhyme, grandeur.
    - Significance: Shapes neoclassical drama theory.
  - **Critical Reception:**
    - Influenced Pope, Johnson, 18th-century criticism.
    - JKPSC focus: Dramatic poesy, balance.

## 2.2 Alexander Pope (1688–1744)

- **Biography:**
  - English poet, satirist, Catholic outsider.
  - Key text: An Essay on Criticism.
- **Poetic Rules:**
  - Concept: Codifies wit, nature, classical rules.
  - An Essay on Criticism: "True wit is nature to advantage dressed."
  - Impact: Standardizes poetic taste, influences Augustan poetry.
  - Exam relevance: Wit, decorum, rules.
- **Critical Principles:**
  - Emphasizes clarity, restraint, moral purpose.
  - Significance: Aesthetic and ethical guide.
- **Critical Reception:**
  - Widely influential, shaped Johnson.
  - JKPSC focus: Poetic theory, wit.

## 2.3 Samuel Johnson (1709–1784)

- **Biography:**
  - English essayist, critic, lexicographer.
  - Key texts: Preface to Shakespeare, Lives of the Poets.
- **Shakespearean Criticism:**
  - Concept: Balances admiration with critique, rejects strict unities.
  - Preface to Shakespeare: Praises universality, notes flaws.
  - Impact: Elevates Shakespeare, influences critical realism.
  - Exam relevance: Shakespeare, unities.
- **Moral Criticism:**
  - Lives of the Poets: Evaluates poets' ethics, style.
  - Significance: Moral and biographical focus.
- **Critical Reception:**
  - Dominant in 18th century, shaped Romantic criticism.
  - JKPSC focus: Moral critique, Shakespeare.

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## 2.4 French Neoclassicism: Corneille and Boileau

- **Pierre Corneille:**
  - French playwright, critic.
  - Key text: Discourses on Dramatic Poetry (1660).
  - Concept: Defends tragedy's moral purpose, unities.
  - Impact: Shapes French drama, influences Boileau.
  - Exam relevance: Unities, tragedy.
- **Nicolas Boileau:**
  - French critic, poet.
  - Key text: L'Art poétique (1674).
  - Concept: Codifies classical rules, decorum.
  - Impact: Standardizes European criticism.
  - Exam relevance: Rules, decorum.

**Table 2: Key Theorists and Concepts**

Theorist	Key Text	Concepts	Impact
Dryden	An Essay of Dramatic Poesy	English drama, balance	National critical pride
Pope	An Essay on Criticism	Wit, poetic rules	Standardized aesthetics
Johnson	Preface to Shakespeare	Shakespeare, moral critique	Critical realism
Boileau	L'Art poétique	Unities, decorum	European standards

## 3. Critical Techniques and Applications

### 3.1 Dryden's Techniques

- **Comparative Analysis:**
  - Compares English vs. French drama in An Essay of Dramatic Poesy.
  - Application: Evaluates dramatic merit.
- **Balanced Critique:**
  - Advocates moderation, as in Of Heroic Plays.
  - Application: Fair assessment.

### 3.2 Pope's Techniques

- **Aesthetic Codification:**
  - Defines wit, nature in An Essay on Criticism.
  - Application: Poetic standardization.
- **Satirical Style:**
  - Uses wit to critique, as in The Dunciad.
  - Application: Moral critique.

### 3.3 Johnson's Techniques

- **Biographical Criticism:**
  - Assesses poets' lives in Lives of the Poets.
  - Application: Contextual analysis.
- **Practical Criticism:**
  - Balances praise, fault in Preface to Shakespeare.
  - Application: Realistic evaluation.

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### 3.4 French Techniques

- **Rule-Based Analysis:**
  - Boileau's unities, decorum in L'Art poétique.
  - Application: Structural critique.
- **Moral Evaluation:**
  - Corneille's tragic purpose in Discourses.
  - Application: Ethical assessment.

## 4. Themes and Critical Perspectives

### 4.1 Major Themes

- **Reason and Order:**
  - Pope's clarity, Dryden's balance.
- **Decorum and Rules:**
  - Boileau's unities, Corneille's structure.
- **Moral Purpose:**
  - Johnson's ethics, Pope's instruction.
- **Classical Emulation:**
  - Aristotle, Horace's influence.

### 4.2 Critical Perspectives

- **Formalist Criticism:**
  - Boileau's structural focus.
- **Moral Criticism:**
  - Johnson's ethical evaluation.
- **Aesthetic Criticism:**
  - Pope's wit, Dryden's style.
- **Comparative Criticism:**
  - Dryden's English vs. French.

## Objective Question Bank

### 1. Who wrote An Essay of Dramatic Poesy?

- |                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| A) Alexander Pope | B) John Dryden     |
| C) Samuel Johnson | D) Nicolas Boileau |

**Answer:** B) John Dryden

**Explanation:** Dryden's essay defends English drama.

### 2. What is Pope's concept of wit in An Essay on Criticism?

- |                      |                                  |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| A) Moral instruction | B) Nature dressed advantageously |
| C) Emotional purging | D) Tragic unity                  |

**Answer:** B) Nature dressed advantageously

**Explanation:** Wit enhances natural truth.

### 3. What does Johnson critique in Preface to Shakespeare?

- |                          |                  |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| A) Shakespeare's unities | B) Poetic rhyme  |
| C) Dramatic structure    | D) Moral purpose |

**Answer:** A) Shakespeare's unities

**Explanation:** Johnson notes Shakespeare's disregard for unities.

#### 4. What is Boileau's focus in L'Art poétique?

- A) Emotional sublime
- B) Classical unities
- C) Romantic imagination
- D) Biographical critique

**Answer:** B) Classical unities

**Explanation:** Boileau codifies neoclassical rules.

#### Timeline: Neo-Classical Criticism Milestones

Year	Event	Significance
1668	Dryden's An Essay of Dramatic Poesy	Dramatic critique
1674	Boileau's L'Art poétique	Neoclassical rules
1711	Pope's An Essay on Criticism	Poetic standards
1765	Johnson's Preface to Shakespeare	Shakespearean critique

#### Conclusion

This chapter on Neo-Classical Criticism, focusing on Dryden, Pope, Johnson, Corneille, and Boileau, provides an exhaustive, profoundly detailed, and expansively comprehensive resource for JKPS exam preparation. , and reliable, equipping candidates to tackle any question in India's highest-level objective exams.

### Romantic Criticism

#### Introduction

Romantic Criticism, flourishing in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, marks a transformative shift in Western literary theory, rejecting the rigid rationalism and classical rules of Neo-Classicism in favor of imagination, emotion, and individual expression. Emerging during the **Romantic Movement** (c. 1780–1830), this critical tradition is defined by the contributions of **William Wordsworth** (1770–1850), **Samuel Taylor Coleridge** (1772–1834), and **Percy Bysshe Shelley** (1792–1822) in Britain, alongside German Romantic influences from **Friedrich Schlegel** (1772–1829) and **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe** (1749–1832). Wordsworth's Preface to Lyrical Ballads (1800) champions poetry's emotional authenticity and common language, Coleridge's Biographia Literaria (1817) explores imagination and organic form, and Shelley's A Defence of Poetry (1821) elevates poets as "unacknowledged legislators." German Romanticism, with Schlegel's concept of Romantic irony and Goethe's Conversations with Eckermann (1836), enriched these ideas, emphasizing creativity and subjective experience. Responding to the socio-political upheavals of the **French Revolution** (1789–1799), industrialization, and Enlightenment rationalism, Romantic Criticism redefined literature's role as a dynamic, expressive force. Its emphasis on imagination, individualism, and nature influenced Victorian, modernist, and contemporary criticism, making it a cornerstone of literary studies.

#### 1. Historical and Theoretical Context

##### 1.1 Late 18th- and Early 19th-Century Britain and Europe

###### • Political Dynamics:

- The **French Revolution (1789–1799)**, with its ideals of liberty and equality, inspired Wordsworth and Coleridge's early radicalism, reflected in Preface to Lyrical Ballads's democratic ethos, relevant for JKPS's political context questions.
- The **Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815)**, culminating in Waterloo (1815), created social upheaval, influencing Shelley's revolutionary vision in A Defence of Poetry, key for understanding political influences on criticism.



- The **Industrial Revolution**, accelerating in Britain with factories and urbanization, prompted Romantic critiques of mechanization, as in Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, crucial for exam socio-political analysis.
- **British monarchy**, under George III and the Regency (1811–1820), faced reformist pressures, reflected in Coleridge's conservative shift in *Biographia Literaria*, relevant for political reform questions.
- **German unification**, emerging post-Napoleon, fostered Romantic nationalism, influencing Schlegel's critical theories, key for comparative political analysis.
- **Cultural and Artistic Developments:**
  - The **Romantic Movement**, with poets like Blake, Keats, and Byron, celebrated imagination and nature, shaping Wordsworth's Preface and Shelley's *Defence*, key for JKPSC's cultural context questions.
  - **Lake Poets**, including Wordsworth and Coleridge, emphasized rural simplicity, reflected in *Lyrical Ballads*'s poetic theory, crucial for literary history analysis.
  - **German Romanticism**, with the **Jena Circle** (Schlegel brothers) and Goethe, promoted aesthetic freedom, influencing Coleridge's organic form, relevant for comparative literature questions.
  - **Literary magazines**, like Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine*, disseminated Romantic ideas, fostering Coleridge's critical essays, key for cultural discourse analysis.
  - **Gothic literature**, with Walpole and Radcliffe, paralleled Romantic emotionalism, influencing Shelley's poetic vision, crucial for aesthetic trend questions.

### 1.2 Intellectual and Philosophical Climate

- **Romantic Philosophy:**
  - **Kant's Idealism** (*Critique of Pure Reason*, 1781) emphasized subjective experience, influencing Coleridge's imagination in *Biographia Literaria*, central to JKPSC's philosophical context questions.
  - **Rousseau's naturalism** (*Emile*, 1762) inspired Wordsworth's focus on rural life and emotion in Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, key for ethical philosophy analysis.
  - **Hegel's dialectics** (*Phenomenology of Spirit*, 1807) shaped Schlegel's Romantic irony, crucial for metaphysical questions.
  - **Enlightenment critique**, by Voltaire and Diderot, provoked Romantic rebellion, reflected in Shelley's *Defence*, relevant for intellectual history analysis.
- **Literary and Aesthetic Foundations:**
  - **Classical rejection**, moving beyond Aristotle's unities, defined Wordsworth's organic form, key for JKPSC's literary history questions.
  - **Medieval revival**, with interest in ballads and folklore, influenced *Lyrical Ballads*'s simplicity, relevant for aesthetic theory analysis.
  - **Sturm und Drang**, German proto-Romanticism, inspired Goethe's emotionalism, shaping Coleridge's theories, crucial for critical lineage questions.
  - **British empiricism**, with Locke and Hume, was challenged by Romantic intuition, reflected in Shelley's poetic vision, key for philosophical influence analysis.

### 1.3 Socio-Cultural Developments

- **Romantic Society:**
  - **Rural decline**, with industrialization, prompted Wordsworth's pastoral focus, relevant for JKPSC's cultural analysis.
  - **Middle-class readership**, expanding with literacy, embraced *Lyrical Ballads*, key for cultural discourse.
  - **Revolutionary fervor**, post-1789, inspired Shelley's radicalism, crucial for sociological questions.



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- **Role of Criticism:**

- **Imaginative liberation**, with Coleridge's organic form, redefined literary creation, relevant for social history analysis.
- **Emotional authenticity**, Wordsworth's focus, prioritized reader experience, crucial for cultural role questions.
- **Poetic prophecy**, Shelley's vision, elevated literature's social role, key for aesthetic analysis.

#### 1.4 Key Historical Events

- **French Revolution (1789):**
  - Shaped Wordsworth's radicalism.
- **Publication of Lyrical Ballads (1798):**
  - Romantic manifesto.
- **Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815):**
  - Influenced Shelley's radicalism.
- **Publication of Biographia Literaria (1817):**
  - Critical milestone.
- **Publication of A Defence of Poetry (1821):**
  - Poetic vision.

#### 1.5 Cultural Shifts

- **Imaginative Freedom:** Emotion, creativity.
- **Natural Inspiration:** Rural, organic.
- **Individual Expression:** Poet's role.
- **Revolutionary Spirit:** Social change.

**Table 1: Key Historical Events and Their Critical Impact**

Event	Date	Description	Critical Impact
French Revolution	1789	Liberty, equality	Wordsworth's radicalism
Lyrical Ballads	1798	Published	Romantic manifesto
Napoleonic Wars	1803–1815	Social upheaval	Shelley's radicalism
Biographia Literaria	1817	Published	Imagination theory
A Defence of Poetry	1821	Published	Poetic prophecy

## 2. Key Concepts and Theorists

### 2.1 William Wordsworth (1770–1850)

- **Biography:**
  - English Lake Poet, Poet Laureate.
  - Key text: Preface to Lyrical Ballads (1800).
- **Poetic Theory:**
  - Concept: Poetry as “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings,” rooted in emotion recollected in tranquility.
  - Preface: Advocates common language, rural subjects.
  - Impact: Redefines poetry's purpose, influences Romantic aesthetics.
  - Exam relevance: Emotion, common language.
- **Role of Poet:**
  - Poet as “man speaking to men,” sensitive to nature.
  - Significance: Elevates poetic accessibility.

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- **Critical Reception:**

- Influenced Coleridge, Shelley, Victorian criticism.
- JKPS focus: Preface, emotion.

## 2.2 Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834)

- **Biography:**

- English poet, philosopher, collaborator with Wordsworth.
- Key text: Biographia Literaria (1817).

- **Imagination:**

- Concept: Primary (creative) vs. secondary (poetic) imagination, organic form.
- Biographia: Distinguishes fancy from imagination.
- Impact: Shapes aesthetic theory, influences formalism.
- Exam relevance: Imagination, organic form.

- **Critical Principles:**

- Emphasizes unity, creativity over rules.
- Significance: Challenges Neo-Classicism.

- **Critical Reception:**

- Influenced Romantic, modernist criticism.
- JKPS focus: Imagination, Biographia.

## 2.3 Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822)

- **Biography:**

- English poet, radical thinker.
- Key text: A Defence of Poetry (1821).

- **Poetic Vision:**

- Concept: Poets as “unacknowledged legislators,” embodying universal truth.
- Defence: Poetry’s moral, social role.
- Impact: Elevates literature’s transformative power.
- Exam relevance: Poet’s role, morality.

- **Aesthetic Theory:**

- Poetry as expression of imagination, beauty.
- Significance: Romantic idealism.

- **Critical Reception:**

- Influenced Victorian, modernist poetics.
- JKPS focus: Defence, poetic role.

## 2.4 German Influences: Schlegel and Goethe

- **Friedrich Schlegel:**

- German critic, Jena Romantic.
- Key text: Athenaeum Fragments (1798).
- Concept: Romantic irony, infinite creativity.
- Impact: Influences Coleridge’s organicism.
- Exam relevance: Irony, Romanticism.

- **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe:**

- German poet, critic.
- Key text: Conversations with Eckermann (1836).
- Concept: Emotional, universal art.
- Impact: Shapes European Romanticism.
- Exam relevance: Universal aesthetics.

**Table 2: Key Theorists and Concepts**

Theorist	Key Text	Concepts	Impact
Wordsworth	Preface to Lyrical Ballads	Emotion, common language	Poetic accessibility
Coleridge	Biographia Literaria	Imagination, organic form	Aesthetic theory
Shelley	A Defence of Poetry	Poet's role, morality	Poetic idealism
Schlegel	Athenaeum Fragments	Romantic irony	Creative freedom

### 3. Critical Techniques and Applications

#### 3.1 Wordsworth's Techniques

- **Emotional Analysis:**
  - Focuses on feeling in Preface, e.g., rustic language.
  - Application: Poetic authenticity evaluation.
- **Natural Critique:**
  - Assesses nature's role in poetry.
  - Application: Thematic analysis.

#### 3.2 Coleridge's Techniques

- **Imaginative Critique:**
  - Analyzes primary, secondary imagination in Biographia.
  - Application: Creative process study.
- **Organic Form:**
  - Evaluates unity, growth in poetry.
  - Application: Structural analysis.

#### 3.3 Shelley's Techniques

- **Visionary Critique:**
  - Assesses poetry's moral role in Defence.
  - Application: Social impact study.
- **Idealistic Analysis:**
  - Focuses on universal truth, beauty.
  - Application: Aesthetic evaluation.

#### 3.4 German Techniques

- **Romantic Irony:**
  - Schlegel's self-reflexive critique.
  - Application: Metatextual analysis.
- **Universal Critique:**
  - Goethe's emotional, global focus.
  - Application: Cross-cultural study.

### 4. Themes and Critical Perspectives

#### 4.1 Major Themes

- **Imagination and Emotion:**
  - Coleridge's creative force, Wordsworth's feelings.
- **Nature and Organic Form:**
  - Wordsworth's rural muse, Coleridge's unity.
- **Poet's Role:**
  - Shelley's legislator, Wordsworth's everyman.

- **Revolutionary Ideals:**
  - Shelley's radicalism, Schlegel's irony.

#### 4.2 Critical Perspectives

- **Romantic Criticism:**
  - Coleridge's imaginative focus.
- **Aesthetic Criticism:**
  - Shelley's idealism, Goethe's universalism.
- **Philosophical Criticism:**
  - Schlegel's irony, Coleridge's metaphysics.
- **Cultural Criticism:**
  - Wordsworth's social ethos.

#### Objective Question Bank

##### 1. Who wrote Preface to Lyrical Ballads?

- A) Coleridge                                      B) Wordsworth  
C) Shelley                                         D) Schlegel

**Answer:** B) Wordsworth

**Explanation:** Wordsworth's Preface defines Romantic poetry.

##### 2. What is Coleridge's primary imagination in Biographia Literaria?

- A) Poetic creation                                B) Creative perception  
C) Fancy     D) Moral vision

**Answer:** B) Creative perception

**Explanation:** Primary imagination shapes reality.

##### 3. What is Shelley's view of poets in A Defence of Poetry?

- A) Moral instructors                            B) Unacknowledged legislators  
C) Rational critics                                D) Natural philosophers

**Answer:** B) Unacknowledged legislators

**Explanation:** Poets shape society's ideals.

##### 4. What is Schlegel's Romantic irony?

- A) Emotional overflow                         B) Self-reflexive creativity  
C) Classical unity                                D) Moral critique

**Answer:** B) Self-reflexive creativity

**Explanation:** Irony embraces artistic freedom.

#### Timeline: Romantic Criticism Milestones

Year	Event	Significance
1798	Lyrical Ballads	Romantic manifesto
1800	Preface to Lyrical Ballads	Poetic theory
1817	Biographia Literaria	Imagination theory
1821	A Defence of Poetry	Poetic vision
1836	Conversations with Eckermann	German influence

#### Conclusion

This chapter on Romantic Criticism, focusing on Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Schlegel, and Goethe, provides an exhaustive, profoundly detailed, and expansively comprehensive resource for JKPS exam preparation. , and reliable, equipping candidates to tackle any question in India's highest-level objective exams.