

# AS YOU LIKE IT -CRITICAL APPRECIATION

1. Romantic comedy - Romanticism as we know is Nature and its surrounding.
2. The truth of life - Love, friendship, passion, surprises, adventure and many more.
3. In AS YOU LIKE IT, we find all these features. Love and love alone play a vital role in the drama.
4. We find different couples wooing each other.
5. Friendship has also its role here.
6. The play is full of mirth, gaiety and laughter.
7. It is full of humour and laughter.
8. Almost all the characters have humour and lust.
9. The rustic figures add to the comic interest.
10. The play ends in general happiness.
11. There is mirth in Orlando wooing Ganymede as Rosalind.
12. Phebe falls in love with Ganymede.
13. The characters play a significant role, as we see in Rosalind's brilliant talk, in Orlando's heroic personality and wit. Touchstone as the fool or Jacques, the cynic philosopher and most importantly the rustics.
14. Touchstone may seem a fool. But he is honest. In the very presence of Audrey, no man would marry her. She is ugly but he loves her.
15. He says that wives are faithless. And that he would leave her when he gets tired of her. This is very amusing.
16. The rustic courtship, that is the love of the shepherd and shepherdess depicts the pastoral feature.
17. Jacques is a unique character of Shakespeare. Melancholy is his chief quality. He constantly finds faults. He was attached to Touchstone because Touchstone had told him that he was a fool.

## **SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDIES -**

1. The period of Shakespeare's works extends over more than twenty-four years.
2. His comedies can be classified into three groups -
  - i) Purely Romantic - Here we have A Mid-Summer's Night Dream, As You Like It, etc.
  - ii) The Serious Comedy - Here we have Merchant of Venice, etc.
  - iii) The realistic comedy where we have the Taming of the Shrew.
3. In Shakespeare's comedy, there is the predominance of women, as we find in Beatrice, Viola, and Rosalind.
4. Mostly love and marriage is the theme of his comedies.
5. Then, it is seen that love is usually in a complicated way. Either two men love one woman or two woman loves one man. There is also that if one is loving another, the former loves someone else.
6. The characterisation is more important than the plot. As we find it AS YOU LIKE IT, we are more interested in Rosalind and Celia.
7. Shakespeare draws his characters' plots and themes from real life. The wood near Athens, the forest of Arden gives the real picture of the English countryside.
8. An important feature of Shakespeare's comedies is the music and songs. Music is the "Food of love".
9. The senior Duke sings in the forest of Arden in AS YOU LIKE IT.
10. It has many songs.
11. His comedies have various types of humour. The fools and clowns are full of fun.
12. Thorn Dike says, - "There are only three industries in this land of Shakespeare's comedy - making love, making songs and making jests. And all these them to perfection".

## **CHARACTER OF TOUCHSTONE**

1. Of all the fools of Shakespeare, Touchstone is the masterpiece, a master of entertainment.

2. His witty remarks expose the follies of others. His foolery has a hidden depth of meaning.
3. The Senior Duke tells of him, "He uses his folly like a stalking horse and under presentation of that shoots his wit".
4. He throws comic light on every topic.
5. He satirizes the follies of others.
6. He makes fun of Orlando's verse in praise of Rosalind.
7. When Corin asked him how he likes the life of the shepherd; he gives a confusing answer. The life of a shepherd was of pleasure and pain both.
8. He makes fun of the courtier life. He makes us laugh. He ridicules the romantic illusion of love.
9. Audrey asks him whether he would like her to be honest. To this, he replies, that a pretty woman need not be honest.
10. He also says he prefers to be a bachelor.
11. With his stupidity, he hints at the deep truth.
12. He is the comic philosopher of life.
13. It seems he is the test of the unreality of life in the forest of Arden. And this is the meaning of his name - 'Touchstone'.
14. He is sincerely devoted to Celia. Celia says about him, "He'll go over the wide world with me".
15. For her sake, he leaves the comfortable life of the court. He prefers to face all the hardship. He is aware of the moral values of life.
16. But though he ridicules romance, he marries Audrey. But then at the same time tells Audrey that would her, when she tires him.

### **PASTORAL AND COMIC ELEMENT**

1. Pastoral life is represented as an ideal life full of unmixed happiness and peace.
2. Shakespeare has introduced the pastoral note in AS YOU LIKE IT. There are two representatives - Silvius and Phebe.
3. Silvius is the typical swain. He is madly in love with Phebe.
4. Phebe does not love him.

5. For Silvius love was another name for endless patience, suffering and sacrifice.
6. Phebe falls in love with Ganymede.
7. Phebe uses Silvius as a messenger.
8. Through Silvius, Phebe sends her letters to Ganymede.
9. But when she comes to know the truth about Ganymede, she marries Silvius.
10. The other pastoral element is seen in the rustic characters - Audrey, William and Corin.
11. William earlier was in love with Audrey.
12. We need to know that Rosalind dresses up as a rustic youth and Celia as a Shepherdess.
13. They live in a cottage of a shepherd. They live here as country folk.
14. The comedy provides laughter and this consists of wit and humour.
15. The play provides comic situations. One of the best is the mock - courtship of Ganymede and Orlando.
16. Then we have the love proposal of Phebe to Ganymede.

## **MUSIC**

1. Songs form an essential part of the play.
2. These serve as a comment on the situation.
3. The songs are only sung in the forest.
4. The songs heighten the romantic atmosphere of the forest.
5. The songs are plain. It has no melody.
6. They convey the air of the green wood and country love.
7. There are six songs. These are sung by the Amiens. These have a special significance. It glorifies the spirit of the country life.
8. The only enemy, in the wood, is, 'winter and rough weather'.
9. The third song is sung by Jacques. It reveals the gloomy character of Jacques.

10. In his songs, Amiens points out that even 'the winter wind is not so unkind as man's ingratitude'. It reflects the cruelty of Fredrick and Oliver. It also reflects the hardships of the others in the forest of Arden.
11. The song by the forester glorifies hunting. It tells about its honour. Jacques points out that hunting was inhuman. It was cruelty.
12. One of the pages sings the song where there is a note of gaiety of youthful love. It glorifies the beauty of nature.
13. The last song is sung in honour of 'Hymen' - 'The God Of Marriage'.
14. This song was sung on the occasion of the marriage of the four couples.
  - i) Rosalind and Orlando.
  - ii) Celia and Oliver.
  - iii) Audrey and Touchstone.
  - iv) Phebe and Silvius.

### **SOLILOQUY**

1. The soliloquy in this play reveals the dramatic technique of Shakespeare.
  2. The best example is the speech of Jacques, "All the world is a stage".
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