

JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)

Department of Languages

English

Syllabus for Entrance Examination

1. Literary Theory and Criticism

- Structuralism
- Post-structuralism
- Feminism
- Postcolonialism
- Marxism
- Psychoanalysis
- Reader-response Theory

2. Major Literatures

- British Literature (from Geoffrey Chaucer to Modern Literature)
- American Literature
- Indian Writing in English
- Postcolonial/Commonwealth Literature

3. Literary Forms and Terms

- Poetry
- Fiction
- Drama
- Non-fictional Prose
- Literary terms and concepts
- Reading comprehension and textual analysis

4. Language and Linguistics

- Basic concepts in Linguistics
- History of the English Language
- Indian English and its features

1. Literary Theory and Criticism

Structuralism

Structuralism studies literature as a system of signs and structures rather than as the expression of individual authors. Influenced by linguistics, especially the ideas of Ferdinand de Saussure, it argues that meaning is produced through relationships within a system. Structuralists examine patterns, binaries, myths, narrative structures, and conventions in texts.

Key Concepts

- Signifier and Signified
- Binary oppositions
- Language as a system
- Underlying structures in myths and narratives

Important Thinkers

- Claude Lévi-Strauss
 - Roland Barthes
 - Roman Jakobson
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Post-Structuralism

Post-structuralism challenges the fixed meanings proposed by structuralism. It argues that meaning is unstable and constantly shifting. Texts can have multiple interpretations, and language never fully captures reality.

Key Concepts

- Instability of meaning
- Deconstruction
- Intertextuality
- Death of the author

Important Thinkers

- Jacques Derrida
 - Michel Foucault
 - Roland Barthes
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Feminism

Feminist criticism studies the representation of women in literature and examines how literature reflects patriarchal power structures. It also explores women's writing, gender identity, and sexuality.

Major Concerns

- Representation of women

- Gender inequality
- Patriarchy
- Women's voices and experiences

Waves of Feminism

1. First Wave – legal rights and suffrage
2. Second Wave – social and cultural inequalities
3. Third/Fourth Wave – identity, intersectionality, media, body politics

Important Thinkers

- Virginia Woolf
 - Simone de Beauvoir
 - Elaine Showalter
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Postcolonialism

Postcolonial criticism examines the cultural, political, and psychological effects of colonialism and imperialism. It studies issues of identity, hybridity, resistance, nationalism, language, and representation.

Key Concepts

- Colonialism and imperialism
- Hybridity
- Orientalism
- Subalternity
- Identity and resistance

Important Thinkers

- Edward Said
 - Homi K. Bhabha
 - Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak
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Marxism

Marxist criticism analyzes literature in relation to class struggle, economic systems, ideology, and power. Literature is viewed as a product of material and social conditions.

Key Concepts

- Base and superstructure
- Ideology
- Class conflict

- Alienation
- Capitalism

Important Thinkers

- Karl Marx
 - Friedrich Engels
 - Antonio Gramsci
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Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalytic criticism applies psychological theories to literature. It studies unconscious desires, repression, dreams, sexuality, and psychological conflicts in authors, characters, and readers.

Key Concepts

- Unconscious mind
- Id, Ego, Superego
- Oedipus complex
- Repression
- Desire and anxiety

Important Thinkers

- Sigmund Freud
 - Carl Jung
 - Jacques Lacan
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Reader-Response Theory

Reader-response criticism emphasizes the role of the reader in creating meaning. A text does not have a single fixed meaning; interpretation depends on the reader's experiences and context.

Key Concepts

- Active role of the reader
- Multiple interpretations
- Implied reader
- Reading process

Important Thinkers

- Wolfgang Iser
- Stanley Fish

- Louise Rosenblatt
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2. Major Literatures

British Literature

Covers literary history from the Medieval period to Modernism.

Major Periods

- Medieval Age – Geoffrey Chaucer
 - Renaissance – William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe
 - Neoclassical Age – Alexander Pope
 - Romantic Age – William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge
 - Victorian Age – Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy
 - Modern Age – T. S. Eliot, Virginia Woolf
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American Literature

Focuses on themes such as democracy, race, identity, and the American Dream.

Major Writers

- Walt Whitman
 - Emily Dickinson
 - Mark Twain
 - Ernest Hemingway
 - Toni Morrison
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Indian Writing in English

Explores Indian culture, nationalism, caste, gender, diaspora, and modernity.

Major Writers

- R. K. Narayan
 - Mulk Raj Anand
 - Salman Rushdie
 - Arundhati Roy
 - Amitav Ghosh
-

Postcolonial/Commonwealth Literature

Studies literature from formerly colonized nations such as India, Africa, the Caribbean, and Australia.

Themes

- Identity crisis
- Cultural conflict
- Migration and diaspora
- Resistance to colonial power

Major Writers

- Chinua Achebe
 - Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o
 - Derek Walcott
 - Jean Rhys
-

3. Literary Forms and Terms

Poetry

Studies poetic devices, forms, rhythm, rhyme, imagery, symbolism, and figures of speech.

Important Terms

- Metaphor
 - Simile
 - Alliteration
 - Irony
 - Symbolism
 - Sonnet
 - Ode
 - Elegy
-

Fiction

Deals with novels and short stories.

Important Elements

- Plot
- Characterization
- Narration

- Point of View
 - Theme
 - Setting
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Drama

Studies theatrical performance and dramatic structure.

Important Concepts

- Tragedy
 - Comedy
 - Catharsis
 - Soliloquy
 - Dramatic irony
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Non-Fictional Prose

Includes essays, biographies, autobiographies, travel writing, and speeches.

Focus Areas

- Style
 - Argument
 - Persuasion
 - Tone and rhetoric
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4. Language and Linguistics

Basic Concepts in Linguistics

Linguistics is the scientific study of language.

Branches

- Phonetics
 - Phonology
 - Morphology
 - Syntax
 - Semantics
 - Pragmatics
-

History of the English Language

Studies the evolution of English through different stages.

Stages

- Old English
- Middle English
- Early Modern English
- Modern English

Important Influences

- Latin
 - French
 - Germanic languages
-

Indian English

Indian English refers to the variety of English used in India.

Features

- Influence of Indian languages
- Code-switching and code-mixing
- Distinct pronunciation and vocabulary
- Cultural expressions and idioms

Important Concepts

- Babu English
- Hinglish
- Localization of English in India