

**SACRED HEART ENGLISH ACADEMY, (PGTRB, NET, SET)  
SALEM-7**

**Poetry groups and movements**

**Poetry groups and movements** or schools may be self-identified by the poets that form them or defined by critics who see unifying characteristics of a body of work by more than one poet. To be a 'school' a group of poets must share a common style or a common ethos. A commonality of form is not in itself sufficient to define a school; for example, Edward Lear, George du Maurier and Ogden Nash do not form a school simply because they all wrote limericks.

There are many different 'schools' of poetry. Some of them are described below in approximate chronological sequence. The subheadings indicate broadly the century in which a style arose.

**Prehistoric**

The Oral tradition is too broad to be a strict school but it is a useful grouping of works whose origins either predate writing, or belong to cultures without writing.

**Sixteenth century - The Castalian Band**

- ❖ **The Castalian Band** was a group of Scottish Jacobean poets, or makars, which flourished between the 1580s and early 1590s in the court of James VI and was consciously modelled on the French example of the Pléiade.
- ❖ Its name is derived from the classical term Castalian Spring, a symbol for poetic inspiration.
- ❖ The principal literary figure to be directly associated with the group was Alexander Montgomerie.
- ❖ Music also played an important part in performances; some members of the Castalian Band are known to have been musicians and many of the works were set as song.
- ❖ James VI was more than simply patron of the group; as a prolific poet himself, and through his own writing on poetry, the young Scottish King was not only the de facto head and director, but a practising member of the Castalian Band.
  
- ❖ The circle of poets with known connections to the Scottish court include:
  - King James VI
  - Alexander Montgomerie (c. 1544–1598)
  - Patrick Hume of Polwarth (c. 1550-1609)
  - Alexander Hume (1557–1609) the younger brother of Patrick Hume
  - William Fowler (1560–1612)
  - John Stewart of Baldynneis (1567–1605)
  - Thomas Hudson (d. 1605)
  - Robert Hudson, brother of Thomas

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**Seventeenth century**

**The Metaphysical poets**

- ❖ The metaphysical poets is a term coined by the poet and critic Samuel Johnson to describe a loose group of British lyric poets of the 17th century, who shared an interest in metaphysical concerns and a common way of investigating them, and whose work was characterized by inventiveness of metaphor (these involved comparisons being known as metaphysical conceits).
- ❖ John Donne, the chief of the Metaphysicals. Others include Henry Vaughan, Andrew Marvell, John Cleveland, and Abraham Cowley as well as, to a lesser extent, George Herbert and Richard Crashaw.

Who coined the term 'Metaphysical Poets'?

- a. John Dryden
- b. Samuel Johnson
- c. John Donne
- d. Andrew Marvell

Which one is false about metaphysical poets?

- a. They were lyric poets.
- b. They belonged to 17<sup>th</sup> century
- c. The term was coined by Dr. Johnson
- d. They wrote basically about Nature.

In which work did Samuel Johnson use the term 'Metaphysical Poets'?

- a. Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets
- b. The Patriot
- c. Plan for a Dictionary of the English Language
- d. *The Literary Magazine*

Which poet was the chapter of 'Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets' based on in which the term 'Metaphysical Poets' was used by Samuel Johnson?

- a. Abraham Cowley
- b. John Donne
- c. Andrew Marvell
- d. Henry Vaughan

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Who said about John Donne, “He affects the metaphysics, not only in his satires, but in his amorous verses, where nature only should reign...”?

- a. Samuel Johnson
- b. John Dryden
- c. Andrew Marvell
- d. Henry Vaughan

How is Drummond of Hawthornden associated to ‘Metaphysical Poets’?

- a. He was the first poet to be identified as a metaphysical poet
- b. He is considered responsible for introducing metaphysical elements to prayers
- c. He is considered to be the only writer before Dryden to speak of ‘metaphysical poets’
- d. He was a critic who strongly disliked metaphysical poetry

What term is associated to metaphysical poetry that suggests the tendency of these poets to display their learning in poetry?

- a. Conceit
- b. Discordia Concors
- c. Wit
- d. Metaphysical

Which of these poets compared soul with a drop of dew in one of his poems?

- a. John Donne
- b. Andrew Marvell
- c. Abraham Cowley
- d. Henry Vaughan

Which of these poets compared two legs of compass to two lovers in one of his poems?

- a. John Donne
- b. Andrew Marvell
- c. Abraham Cowley
- d. Henry Vaughan

Which of these metaphysical poets married Anne More?

- a. Andrew Marvell
- b. Abraham Cowley
- c. Henry Vaughan
- d. John Donne

Which of the following metaphysical poems talk of vegetable love?

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- a. Valediction: Forbidding Mourning
- b. A Dialogue Between The Soul And Body
- c. To His Coy Mistress
- d. A Garden, Written after the Civil Wars

What does 'conceit' refer to in concern to metaphysical poetry?

- a. Far-fetched similes and metaphors
- b. Showing off of learning
- c. Sincerity to one theme
- d. Use of same similes and metaphors at multiple points in a poem

Whom does John Donne request to 'Batter my heart'?

- a. His beloved
- b. God
- c. World
- d. Destiny

What were the themes very common to poetry contemporary to the metaphysical poets but missing from the poems of these poets?

- a. Contemporary society
- b. Morality and values
- c. Love and religion
- d. Nature and Mythology

Who defined the wit of Metaphysical Poets as "...a kind of Discordia concors; a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike."

- a. John Dryden
- b. Samuel Johnson
- c. John Dryden
- d. Herbert Grierson

In 1921, who published *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, which collected poems by Donne, Herbert, Vaughan, Marvell, and Carew?

- a. Herbert Grierson
- b. S. Eliot
- c. Antole France
- d. None of the above

**The Cavalier poets**

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- ❖ Cavalier poets are a broad description of school of English poets of the 17th century, who came from the classes that supported King Charles I during the English Civil War. Much of their poetry is light in style, and generally secular in subject.
- ❖ They were marked out by their lifestyle and religion from the Roundheads, who supported Parliament and were often Puritans (either Presbyterians or Independents).
- ❖ The best known of the Cavalier poets are Ben Jonson, Robert Herrick, Richard Lovelace, Thomas Carew, and Sir John Suckling.

### The Danrin School

- ❖ **The Danrin School** is a school of haikai poetry founded by the poet Nishiyama Sōin (1605 to 1682).
- ❖ The name literally means 'talkative forest'.
- ❖ It aimed to move away from the serious 'bookishness' popular in Japanese poetry at the time and to become more in touch with the common people, therefore infusing a greater spirit of freedom into their poetry.
- ❖ The Danrin school favored the usage of plain language, everyday subjects, and the use of humor. Its members explored people's daily life for sources of playfulness, though they were often accused of ending up with mere frivolity.
- ❖ The renowned poet Matsuo Bashō was once a member of the Danrin school, though he later broke away from it.

### Eighteenth century

#### Classical poetry

- ❖ **Classical poetry** echoes the forms and values of classical antiquity.
- ❖ Favouring formal, restrained forms, it has recurred in various neoclassical schools since the eighteenth century Augustan poets such as Alexander Pope.
- ❖ English poets from 1660 to 1798 are generally known as neo-classical poets. They are called so because they had a great respect for classical writers and imitated much from them. Order, correctness and established rules were carefully observed. Set phrases and reasons were commonly used in their poetry. For neo-classical writers, poetry was an imitation of human life.
- ❖ The eighteenth century was called The Augustan Age. As late as 1828, Macaulay called the neo-classical age "the critical school of poetry."
- ❖ John Dryden is a famous poet of his time. Dryden wrote a great allegorical satire named *Absalom and Achitophel*.

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- ❖ In this poem he had used a biblical story in order to attack the politicians of his time. Another satire is *MacFlecknoe* which attacks a rival poet named Shadwell.
- ❖ Dryden had a good command of heroic couplets through which he could write biting satires.
- ❖ *The Ode for Saint Cecilia's Day* and *Alexander's Feast* are his best short poems.
- ❖ Alexander Pope is another famous satirical poet of the eighteenth century.
- ❖ Though Pope was physically weak because of his long illness, he wrote *Essay on Criticism* while he was still young.
- ❖ The book contains some remarkable expressions. In his delightful poem *The Rape of the Lock* he uses a trivial subject matter and treats it significantly.
- ❖ In his satirical poem *The Dunciad* Pope laughs at the poor poets who are writing for their living.
- ❖ He sometimes has misused his genius by attacking the individual in his poems which now seem of little importance.
- ❖ His later poems are the *Essay on Man* and four *Moral Essays*.
- ❖ The first one is somewhat philosophical. Like Dryden, he also translated some classical works of Homer.
- ❖ During this time most of the poets commonly wrote poems about the man and his city life. But unlike other poets James Thomson turned to nature and wrote four poems on the seasons in blank verse. They are *Winter*, *Summer*, *Spring* and *Autumn*. But he could not avoid languages of his time.
- ❖ Thomson wrote another good poem *The Castle of Indolence* in Spenserian stanza. It contains beautiful sleepy language.
- ❖ Thomas Gray was also a great poet of this age. He belonged to a group of poets who are sometimes called the Churchyard school of the poets.
  - *The Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* is one of the best poems in English by Gray.
  - In this poem he expresses the sorrowful feelings which arise in his mind on seeing the graves of the poor country people buried near the church.
  - His ode *The Bard* is a very sad song.
  - In his *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Elton College* he describes the schoolboys who are happy and careless about the troubles in the coming days of their lives.

**The "Graveyard Poets**

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- ❖ The "**Graveyard Poets**", also termed "Churchyard Poets" were a number of pre-Romantic English poets of the 18th century characterised by their gloomy meditations on mortality, 'skulls and coffins, epitaphs and worms'<sup>[2]</sup> elicited by the presence of the graveyard.
- ❖ Moving beyond the elegy lamenting a single death, their purpose was rarely sensationalist.
- ❖ As the century progressed, "graveyard" poetry increasingly expressed a feeling for the 'sublime' and uncanny, and an antiquarian interest in ancient English poetic forms and folk poetry.
- ❖ The "graveyard poets" are often recognized as precursors of the Gothic literary genre, as well as the Romantic movement.
- ❖ The Graveyard School is an indefinite literary grouping that binds together a wide variety of authors; what makes a poem a "graveyard" poem remains open to critical dispute. At its narrowest, the term "Graveyard School" refers to four poems:
  - Thomas Gray's Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard,
  - Thomas Parnell's "Night-Piece On Death",
  - Robert Blair's The Grave (poem), and
  - Edward Young's Night-Thoughts.
- At its broadest, it can describe a host of poetry and prose works popular in the early and mid-eighteenth century.
- The term itself was not used as a brand for the poets and their poetry until William Macneile Dixon did so in 1898.
- ❖ William Blake is a poet as well as an artist. Most of his poems are mysterious. It is very difficult to understand the meaning of some poems by him.
  - Blake was a visionary poet and he never believed in earthly things.
  - His great poetic works are *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*.
  - Of these, two poetic works, the second one is darker and heavier than the first one. It presents the painful realities of life.
- ❖ Robert Burns was a Scottish farmer whose lyrics became famous.
  - He wrote hundreds of songs and lyrics, and among them *Mary Morrison*, *John Anderson* and *The Banks O' Doonare* famous.
  - His love-songs include 'My love is like a red, red rose'. He had a deep understanding of animals and love for them. Even a mouse brought a gentle poem from his pen.
- ❖ One more eighteenth-century poet is worth our special notice:

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- ❖ William Cowper's verse shows the beginning of the swing away from the formal classical style of Pope towards the simpler, more natural expression which we shall see in Wordsworth and Coleridge.

**Sons of Ben**

- ❖ **Sons of Ben** were followers of Ben Jonson in English poetry and drama in the first half of the seventeenth century. These men followed Ben Jonson's philosophy and his style of poetry. Their poetry was closest in style to Ben Jonson's. These men, unlike Jonson, were loyal to the king.
- ❖ Sons of Ben were the dramatists who were overtly and admittedly influenced by Jonson's drama, his most distinctive artistic achievement. Joe Lee Davis listed eleven playwrights in this group: Richard Brome, Thomas Nabbes, Henry Glapthorne, Thomas Killigrew, Sir William Davenant, William Cartwright, Shackerley Marmion, Jasper Mayne, Peter Hausted, Thomas Randolph, and William Cavendish.
- ❖ The term, or the alternative "Tribe of Ben," was a self-description by some of the Cavalier poets who admired and were influenced by Jonson's poetry, including Robert Herrick, Richard Lovelace, Sir John Suckling, and Thomas Carew. Jonson and his followers congregated at London taverns, especially the Apollo Room in the *Devil Tavern*, near Temple-Bar. Above the mantelpiece in this room Jonson inserted a marble slab engraved with his *Leges Conviviales*, or 'Rules of Conviviality'. These were Jonson's rules for the group. Written in Latin, they were modelled on Horace and Martial. Translations were reprinted throughout the following century.

**The Churchyard School of Poets**

- ❖ The 18th Century was an age of great prose. Until its close, there was only second rate poetry. In the closing years, a change took place in the character of its verse that finally led to the fine Romantic poetry.
- ❖ The change was first seen in James Thomson's *The Seasons*.
  - It was a collection of four poems in blank verse: *Winter* (1726), *Summer*, *Spring* and *Autumn* (1730).
  - These poems described woods, fields, birds and deserts.
  - Though he occasionally used the artificial language of the age, he started a new trend in English poetry.
- ❖ During this period, a group of young poets chose death for their subject.
- ❖ These poets are sometimes called the **Churchyard School of poets**.
- ❖ One of them was **Edward Young**.
  - His *Night Thoughts* was very popular and was written in good blank verse.

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- In this, he deals with life, death, the future world and God.
- It has a sad and dark atmosphere filled with strange imaginations.
- ❖ **Robert Blair** also wrote in the same tone and used the blank verse.
- ❖ In his poem *The Grave*, he requests the dead to come back and tell about the grave.
- ❖ The finest poet of this school was **Thomas Gray**.
  - His *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* is one of the most beautiful and famous English poems.
  - In this elegy, he expresses his sad thoughts as he looks at the graves of the poor villagers in the churchyard of Stoke Poges.
  - He thinks of what they would have become if they had received the opportunity.
  - But he feels sorry for them because they could not go to the cities to become famous.
  - His ode *The Bard* is a sad song by a Welsh bard.
  - He curses King Edward I and his race for killing all the bards of Wales.
- ❖ Some poets turned to the past to escape from the orderliness of the 18th Century.
- ❖ Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* brought to light many old poems from the darkness of the past.
- ❖ The most recent resurgence of Neoclassicism is religious and politically reactionary work of the likes of T. S. Eliot.

**Romanticism**

- ❖ **Romanticism** started in late 18th century Western Europe.
- ❖ Wordsworth's and Coleridge's 1798 publication of *Lyrical Ballads* is considered by some as the first important publication in the movement.
- ❖ Romanticism stressed strong emotion, imagination, freedom within or even from classical notions of form in art, and the rejection of established social conventions.
- ❖ It stressed the importance of "nature" in language and celebrated the achievements of those perceived as heroic individuals and artists.
- ❖ Romantic poets include William Blake, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and John Keats (those previous six sometimes referred to as the Big Six, or the Big Five without Blake);
- ❖ Other Romantic poets include James Macpherson, and Robert Southey.
- ❖ Romanticism proper was preceded by several related developments from the mid-18th century on that can be termed Pre-Romanticism.

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- ❖ Among such trends was a new appreciation of the medieval romance, from which the Romantic movement derives its name.
- ❖ The romance was a tale or ballad of chivalric adventure whose emphasis on individual heroism and on the exotic and the mysterious was in clear contrast to the elegant formality and artificiality of prevailing Classical forms of literature, such as the French Neoclassical tragedy or the English heroic couplet in poetry.
- ❖ This new interest in relatively unsophisticated but overtly emotional literary expressions of the past was to be a dominant note in Romanticism.
- ❖ Romanticism in English literature began in the 1790s with the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads* of **William Wordsworth** and **Samuel Taylor Coleridge**.
- ❖ Wordsworth's "Preface" to the second edition (1800) of *Lyrical Ballads*, in which he described poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," became the manifesto of the English Romantic movement in poetry.
- ❖ **William Blake** was the third principal poet of the movement's early phase in England.
- ❖ The first phase of the Romantic Movement in Germany was marked by innovations in both content and literary style and by a preoccupation with the mystical, the subconscious, and the supernatural.
- ❖ A wealth of talents, including Friedrich Hölderlin, the early Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Jean Paul, Novalis, Ludwig Tieck, A.W. and Friedrich Schlegel, Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, and Friedrich Schelling, belong to this first phase.
- ❖ In Revolutionary France, the vicomte de Chateaubriand and Mme de Staël were the chief initiators of Romanticism, by virtue of their influential historical and theoretical writings.
- ❖ The second phase of Romanticism, comprising the period from about 1805 to the 1830s, was marked by a quickening of cultural nationalism and a new attention to national origins, as attested by the collection and imitation of native folklore, folk ballads and poetry, folk dance and music, and even previously ignored medieval and Renaissance works. The revived historical appreciation was translated into imaginative writing by Sir Walter Scott, who is often considered to have invented the historical novel. At about this same time English Romantic poetry had reached its zenith in the works of John Keats, Lord Byron, and Percy Bysshe Shelley.
- ❖ A notable by-product of the Romantic interest in the emotional were works dealing with the supernatural, the weird, and the horrible, as in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and works by C.R. Maturin, the Marquis de Sade, and E.T.A. Hoffmann.
- ❖ The second phase of Romanticism in Germany was dominated by Achim von Arnim, Clemens Brentano, J.J. von Görres, and Joseph von Eichendorff.
- ❖ By the 1820s Romanticism had broadened to embrace the literatures of almost all of Europe. In this later, second, phase, the movement was less universal in approach and concentrated more on exploring each nation's historical and cultural inheritance and on examining the passions and struggles of exceptional individuals.

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- ❖ A brief survey of Romantic or Romantic-influenced writers would have to include
  - Thomas De Quincey,
  - William Hazlitt, and
  - Bronte sisters in England
  - Victor Hugo, and
  - Almost all of the important writers in pre-Civil War America.
- ❖ The movement emphasized intense emotion as an authentic source of aesthetic experience, placing new emphasis on such emotions as apprehension, horror and terror, and awe—especially that experienced in confronting the new aesthetic categories of the sublimity and beauty of nature.
- ❖ It elevated folk art and ancient custom to something noble, but also spontaneity as a desirable characteristic. In contrast to the Rationalism and Classicism of the Enlightenment, Romanticism revived medievalism and elements of art and narrative perceived as authentically medieval in an attempt to escape population growth, early urban sprawl, and industrialism.

**The Lake Poets**

- ❖ **The Lake Poets** were a group of English poets who all lived in the Lake District of England, United Kingdom, at the turn of the nineteenth century.
- ❖ As a group, they followed no single "school" of thought or literary practice then known. They were named, only to be uniformly disparaged, by the Edinburgh Review.
- ❖ They are considered part of the Romantic Movement.
- ❖ The three main figures of what has become known as the Lakes School were William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Robert Southey.
- ❖ They were associated with several other poets and writers, including Dorothy Wordsworth, Charles Lamb, Charles Lloyd, Hartley Coleridge, John Wilson, and Thomas De Quincey.

**The spasmodic poets**

- ❖ **The spasmodic poets** was a group of British poets of the Victorian era.
- ❖ The term was coined by William Edmonstoune Aytoun with some derogatory as well as humorous intention.
- ❖ The epithet itself is attributed, by Thomas Carlyle, to Lord Byron.
- ❖ Spasmodic poets include George Gilfillan, the friend and inspiration of William McGonagall. Gilfillan worked for thirty years on his long poem *Night*, but he is best known for his encouragement of the young Spasmodics in his literary reviews written under the pseudonym Apollodorus.

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- ❖ Others associated were Philip James Bailey, Richard Hengist Horne, Sydney Thompson Dobell, Alexander Smith, John Stanyan Bigg, Gerald Massey, John Westland Marston, and Ebenezer Jones.<sup>[31]</sup>
- ❖ The term "spasmodic" was also applied by contemporary reviewers to Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh*, Tennyson's *Maud*, Longfellow's *Golden Legend*, and the poetry of Arthur Hugh Clough.
- ❖ These poets are not generally included in the Spasmodic school by modern literary critics. Spasmodic poetry was extremely popular from the late-1840s through the 1850s when it abruptly fell out of fashion. William Edmondstone Aytoun's parodic *Firmilian: A Spasmodic Tragedy* (1854) is credited with getting the verse of the Spasmodic school laughed down as bombast.<sup>[41]</sup>

Spasmodic poetry frequently took the form of verse drama, the protagonist of which was often a poet. It was characterized by a number of features including lengthy introspective soliloquies by the protagonist, which led to the charge that the poetry was egotistical.