



**NEERAJ®**

# B.E.G.E.-105

## UNDERSTANDING PROSE

*By: Dharamdeep*

*Question Bank cum Chapterwise Reference Book  
Including Many Solved Question Papers*



**NEERAJ  
PUBLICATIONS**

*(Publishers of Educational Books)*  
( An ISO 9001 : 2008 Certified Company )

Sales Office:  
1507, 1st Floor, Nai Sarak, Delhi - 6  
Ph.: 011-23260329, 45704411,  
23244362, 23285501  
E-mail: [info@neerajignoubooks.com](mailto:info@neerajignoubooks.com)  
Website: [www.neerajignoubooks.com](http://www.neerajignoubooks.com)

MRP ₹ 240/-

**Published by:**

**NEERAJ PUBLICATIONS**

Sales Office : 1507, 1st Floor, Nai Sarak, Delhi-110 006

E-mail: [info@neerajignoubooks.com](mailto:info@neerajignoubooks.com)

Website: [www.neerajignoubooks.com](http://www.neerajignoubooks.com)

**Reprint Edition with Updation of Sample Question Paper Only**

Typesetting by: Competent Computers

Printed at: Novelty Printer

**Notes:**

1. For the best & upto-date study & results, please prefer the recommended textbooks/ study material only.
2. This book is just a Guide Book/Reference Book published by NEERAJ PUBLICATIONS based on the suggested syllabus by a particular Board / University.
3. The information and data etc. given in this Book are from the best of the data arranged by the Author, but for the complete and upto-date information and data etc. see the Govt. of India Publications/textbooks recommended by the Board/ University.
4. Publisher is not responsible for any omission or error though every care has been taken while preparing, printing, composing and proof reading of the Book. As all the Composing, Printing, Publishing and Proof Reading etc. are done by Human only and chances of Human Error could not be denied. If any reader is not satisfied, then he is requested not to buy this book.
5. In case of any dispute whatsoever the maximum anybody can claim against NEERAJ PUBLICATIONS is just for the price of the Book.
6. If anyone finds any mistake or error in this Book, he is requested to inform the Publisher, so that the same could be rectified and he would be provided the rectified Book free of cost.
7. The number of questions in NEERAJ study materials are indicative of general scope and design of the question paper.
8. Question Paper and their answers given in this Book provide you just the approximate pattern of the actual paper and is prepared based on the memory only. However, the actual Question Paper might somewhat vary in its contents, distribution of marks and their level of difficulty.
9. Any type of ONLINE Sale/Resale of "NEERAJ BOOKS/NEERAJ IGNOU BOOKS" published by "NEERAJ PUBLICATIONS" on Websites, Web Portals, Online Shopping Sites, like Amazon, Flipkart, Ebay, Snapdeal, etc. is strictly not permitted without prior written permission from NEERAJ PUBLICATIONS. Any such online sale activity by an Individual, Company, Dealer, Bookseller, Book Trader or Distributor will be termed as ILLEGAL SALE of NEERAJ IGNOU BOOKS/NEERAJ BOOKS and will invite legal action against the offenders.
10. Subject to Delhi Jurisdiction only.

© Reserved with the Publishers only.

**Spl. Note:** This book or part thereof cannot be translated or reproduced in any form (except for review or criticism) without the written permission of the publishers.

## **How to get Books by Post (V.P.P.)?**

If you want to Buy NEERAJ IGNOU BOOKS by Post (V.P.P.), then please order your complete requirement at our Website [www.neerajignoubooks.com](http://www.neerajignoubooks.com). You may also avail the 'Special Discount Offers' prevailing at that Particular Time (Time of Your Order).

To have a look at the Details of the Course, Name of the Books, Printed Price & the Cover Pages (Titles) of our NEERAJ IGNOU BOOKS You may Visit/Surf our website [www.neerajignoubooks.com](http://www.neerajignoubooks.com).

No Need To Pay In Advance, the Books Shall be Sent to you Through V.P.P. Post Parcel. All The Payment including the Price of the Books & the Postal Charges etc. are to be Paid to the Postman or to your Post Office at the time when You take the Delivery of the Books & they shall Pass the Value of the Goods to us by Charging some extra M.O. Charges.

We usually dispatch the books nearly within 4-5 days after we receive your order and it takes Nearly 5 days in the postal service to reach your Destination (In total it take atleast 10 days).



**NEERAJ PUBLICATIONS**

(Publishers of Educational Books)

( An ISO 9001 : 2008 Certified Company )

**1507, 1st Floor, NAI SARAK, DELHI - 110006**

**Ph. 011-23260329, 45704411, 23244362, 23285501**

E-mail: [info@neerajignoubooks.com](mailto:info@neerajignoubooks.com) Website: [www.neerajignoubooks.com](http://www.neerajignoubooks.com)

# CONTENTS

## UNDERSTANDING PROSE

### *Question Bank – (Previous Year Solved Question Papers)*

<i>Question Paper—June, 2019 ( Solved )</i>	1-2
<i>Question Paper—December, 2018 ( Solved )</i>	1-3
<i>Question Paper—June, 2018 ( Solved )</i>	1-4
<i>Question Paper—December, 2017 ( Solved )</i>	1-2
<i>Question Paper—June, 2017 ( Solved )</i>	1-2
<i>Question Paper—December, 2016 ( Solved )</i>	1-3
<i>Question Paper—June, 2016 ( Solved )</i>	1
<i>Question Paper—December, 2015 ( Solved )</i>	1-3
<i>Question Paper—June, 2015 ( Solved )</i>	1-3
<i>Question Paper—June, 2014 ( Solved )</i>	1-2
<i>Question Paper—June, 2013 ( Solved )</i>	1-4
<i>Question Paper—June, 2012 ( Solved )</i>	1-3
<i>Question Paper—June, 2011 ( Solved )</i>	1-3
<i>Question Paper—December, 2010 ( Solved )</i>	1-2

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Chapterwise Reference Book</i>	<i>Page</i>
--------------	-----------------------------------	-------------

### **DESCRIPTIVE PROSE**

1. 'Understanding Prose': An Introduction	1
2. Descriptive Prose-1	6
3. Descriptive Prose-2	12
4. Descriptive Prose-3	18
5. Narrative Prose-1	24
6. Narrative Prose-2	32
7. Narrative Prose-3	39

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
<b><u>EXPOSITORY PROSE</u></b>		
8.	Expository Prose-1	46
9.	Expository Prose-2	51
10.	Expository Prose-3	56
11.	Expository Prose-4	61
<b><u>FORMS OF PROSE: SHORT STORY</u></b>		
12.	Introduction to the Short Story	67
13.	'Mother' by <i>Judah Waten</i>	73
14.	'Misery' By Anton Chekhov	78
15.	'The Other Woman' By Dina Mehta	81
16.	'The Legacy' By Virginia Woolf	85
<b><u>THE NOVEL: <i>THE BINDING VINE</i></u></b>		
17.	General Introduction to the Indian English Novel	89
18.	<i>The Binding Vine</i> -Plot	96
19.	Themes	104
20.	Characterization	108
21.	Technique	114
<b><u>NON-FICTIONAL PROSE-I: ESSAYS, LETTERS AND TRAVELOGUES</u></b>		
22.	Francis Bacon: "Of Great Place"	119
23.	Jamaica Kincaid: "On Seeing England For The First Time"	124

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
24.	Charles Lamb: "A Dissertation Upon Roast Pig"	129
25.	Jawaharlal Nehru: Letter to Indira Gandhi: "The Quest of Man"	135
26.	Bill Aitken: <i>Travels by A Lesser Line</i> Chapters – 'Last Resort in The South' and "The Poetic Diction of Steam"	139
<b><u>NON-FICTIONAL PROSE-II: BIOGRAPHY, AUTOBIOGRAPHY, DIARY AND SPEECHES</u></b>		
27.	Boswell's: <i>Life of Johnson</i>	143
28.	M.K. Gandhi's: <i>An Autobiography</i> or <i>The Story of My Experiments With Truth</i>	149
29.	Anne Frank's: <i>The Diary of A Young Girl</i>	156
30.	Margaret Laurence's: "My Final Hour"	164
		■ ■

**Sample Preview  
of the  
Solved  
Sample Question  
Papers**

*Published by:*



**NEERAJ  
PUBLICATIONS**

[www.neerajbooks.com](http://www.neerajbooks.com)

# QUESTION PAPER

( June – 2019 )

( Solved )

## UNDERSTANDING PROSE

Time: 3 Hours ]

[ Maximum Marks: 100

Note: Answer any five questions. All questions carry equal marks.

**Q. 1. What is the definition of prose? Discuss the kinds and characteristics of prose.**

**Ans.** The word 'prose' is derived from the Latin term '**prosus**' meaning 'direct' or 'straight'. Thus prose in direct writing is of three kinds: descriptive, narrative and expository. The words have two kinds of meanings denotative and connotative. The literary forms of prose are, short story, novel, essay, biography and auto-biography. They have their own characteristics. Figures of speech enhance the attraction of a prose writing. Main figures of speech are simile, metaphor, image, symbol, personification, metonymy, synecdoche, apostrophe, hyperbole and litotes.

Prose is the most typical form of language, applying ordinary grammatical structure and natural flow of speech rather than rhythmic structure (as in traditional poetry). Prose is reciprocal to poetry. While there are critical debates on the construction of prose, its simplicity and loosely defined structure has led to its adoption for the majority of spoken dialogue, factual discourse as well as topical and fictional writing. It is commonly used, for example, in literature, newspapers, magazines, encyclopedias, broadcasting, film, history, philosophy, law and many other forms of communication.

Novels, essays, short stories, and works of criticism are examples of prose. Other examples include: comedy, drama, fable, fiction, folk tale, hagiography, legend, literature, myth, narrative, saga, science fiction, story, theme, tragedy.

Prose lacks the more formal metrical structure of verse that is almost always found in traditional poetry. Poems often involve a meter and/or rhyme scheme. Prose, instead, comprises full, grammatical sentences, which then constitute paragraphs and overlook aesthetic appeal. Some works of prose do contain traces of metrical structure or versification and a conscious blend of the two literature formats is

known as prose poetry. Similarly, any work of verse with fewer rules and restrictions is known as free verse. Verse is considered to be more systematic or formulaic, whereas prose is the most reflective of ordinary (often conversational) speech. On this point Samuel Taylor Coleridge requested, jokingly, that novice poets should know the "definitions of prose and poetry; that is, prose,-words in their best order; poetry,-the best words in their best order." In Molière's play *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*, Monsieur Jourdain asked for something to be written in neither verse nor prose. A philosophy master replied that "there is no other way to express oneself than with prose or verse," for the simple reason being that "everything that is not prose is verse, and everything that is not verse is prose."

**Also Ref.:** See Chapter-2, Page No. 2, 'Varieties of Prose' and Page No. 3, 'Forms of Prose'.

*Or*

**Define fictional prose and evaluate it by giving examples from any text prescribed in your course.**

**Ans.** Fiction broadly refers to any narrative that is derived from the imagination—in other words, not based strictly on history or fact. It can also refer, more narrowly, to narratives written only in prose (the novel and short story), and is often used as a synonym for the novel. In cinema it corresponds to narrative film in opposition to documentary as far as novel to feature film and short story to short film.

In its most narrow usage fiction refers to novels, but it may also denote any "literary narrative" (see literary fiction), including novels, novellas, and short stories. More broadly, fiction has come to encompass imaginative storytelling in any format, including writings, theatrical performances, comics, films, television programs, animations, games (most notably, video games and role-playing games), and so on.

A work of fiction implies the inventive act of constructing an imaginary world, so its audience does not typically expect it to be totally faithful to the real world in presenting only characters who are actual people or descriptions that are factually true. Instead, the context of fiction, generally understood as not adhering precisely to the real world, is more open to interpretation. Characters and events within a fictional work may even be set in their own context entirely separate from the known universe: an independent fictional universe.

Fiction's traditional opposite is non-fiction, a narrative work whose creator assumes responsibility for presenting only the historical and factual truth. The distinction between fiction and non-fiction however can be unclear in some recent artistic and literary movements, such as postmodern literature.

Fictional prose includes short stories, novels, jokes, tall tales, etc. Prose that doesn't pass itself off as depictions of events that actually happened. You can have historical fiction, in which the broad events (i.e., the Civil War) have a basis in fact, but the characters and their individual actions are made up by the author. See Stephen Crane's "*The Red Badge of Courage*" as an example. You could write a piece of fictional prose about (for example) George Washington crossing the Delaware. Maybe your narrator is one of the people rowing the boat, and you start your story: "So now the Old Man wants to go on a boat ride, at night, in the middle of winter, and gets me out of a nice warm tavern to row his stupid self across this dumb river." Since you have no way of knowing what any of the boatmen actually thought, you're writing fictional prose.

Let us take the example of *Mother* by Judah Waten.

**Also Ref.:** See Chapter-13, Page No. 75, 'Discussion'.

**Q. 2. Anne Frank's '*The Diary of a Young Girl*' is much more than a personal account of her experiences. Discuss.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-29, Page No. 162, 'Anne Frank's Diary as a Literary Work'.

**Or**

**Examine the biographical techniques used by Boswell in '*Life of Johnson*'.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-27, Page No. 147, 'Biographical Techniques'.

**Q. 3. Through her grief, Urmi is drawn into the lives of three very different women, who are 'haunted by fears, secrets and deep grief'. Discuss with reference to Shashi Deshpande's *The Binding Vine*.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-20, Page No. 108, 'Characters in Novel'.

**Or**

***The Binding Vine* discusses the conflict between the idea that women have of themselves and the idea that women have of themselves and the idea that society imposes on them. Discuss with examples from the text.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-19, Page No. 106, 'The Theme of Human Relationships'.

**Q. 4. Comment upon the tragedy of the old man and the insensitivity of his listeners in the short story 'Misery' by Anton Chekov.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-14, Page No. 79, 'Discussion'.

**Or**

**Discuss and establish that in '*The Legacy*' we have the theme of ego, jealousy, identity and gender roles.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-16, Page No. 85, 'Discussion'.

**Q. 5. Judah Waten gives the insider's view of Jewish life in Australia. Discuss with the help of the prescribed text.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-13, Page No. 73, 'Judah Waten' and Page No. 75, 'Discussion'.

**Or**

**Discuss '*The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber*' as an example of narrative prose.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-6, Page No. 32, 'Passage From Hemingways', 'The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber'.

**Q. 6. What are the views of Edmund Leach in '*Men and Learning*' on education and society?**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-9, Page No. 54, 'Discussion'.

**Or**

**What are Tagore's views on the importance of art as reflected in '*The Artists*'.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-10, Page No. 59, 'Discussion' and 'Style'.

**Q. 7. Narrate the opinion of Kincaid about England when she first visited it.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-23, Page No. 127, 'Theme'.

**Or**

**Discuss Lamb as a prose-writer.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-24, Page No. 133, 'Prose Style'.





# Sample Preview of The Chapter

*Published by:*



**NEERAJ  
PUBLICATIONS**

[www.neerajbooks.com](http://www.neerajbooks.com)

---

# UNDERSTANDING PROSE

---

DESCRIPTIVE PROSE



---

## ‘Understanding Prose’: An Introduction

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

The word ‘prose’ is derived from the Latin term ‘**prosus**’ meaning ‘direct’ or ‘straight’. Thus prose in direct writing is of three kinds: descriptive, narrative and expository. The words have two kinds of meanings denotative and connotative. The literary forms of prose are, short story, novel, essay, biography and autobiography. They have their own characteristics. Figures of speech enhance the attraction of a prose writing. Main figures of speech are simile, metaphor, image, symbol, personification, metonymy, synecdoche, apostrophe, hyperbole and litotes.

### **CHAPTER AT A GLANCE**

#### **PROSE AND POETRY**

Prose is the most typical form of language, applying ordinary grammatical structure and natural flow of speech rather than rhythmic structure (as in traditional poetry). Prose is reciprocal to poetry. While there are critical debates on the construction of prose, its simplicity and loosely defined structure has led to its adoption for the majority of spoken dialogue, factual discourse as well as topical and fictional writing. It is commonly used, for example, in literature, newspapers, magazines, encyclopedias, broadcasting, film, history, philosophy, law and many other forms of communication.

Novels, essays, short stories, and works of criticism are examples of prose. Other examples include: comedy, drama, fable, fiction, folk tale, hagiography, legend, literature, myth, narrative, saga, science fiction, story, theme, tragedy.

Prose lacks the more formal metrical structure of verse that is almost always found in traditional poetry. Poems often involve a meter and/or rhyme scheme. Prose, instead, comprises full, grammatical sentences, which then constitute paragraphs and overlook aesthetic appeal. Some works of prose do contain traces of metrical structure or versification and a conscious blend

of the two literature formats is known as prose poetry. Similarly, any work of verse with fewer rules and restrictions is known as free verse. Verse is considered to be more systematic or formulaic, whereas prose is the most reflective of ordinary (often conversational) speech. On this point Samuel Taylor Coleridge requested, jokingly, that novice poets should know the “definitions of prose and poetry; that is, prose,-words in their best order; poetry,-the best words in their best order.” In Molière’s play *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*, Monsieur Jourdain asked for something to be written in neither verse nor prose. A philosophy master replied that “there is no other way to express oneself than with prose or verse,” for the simple reason being that “everything that is not prose is verse, and everything that is not verse is prose.”

**Difference between Prose and Poetry:** The difference between prose and poetry can be understood very clearly by the help of French critic Paul Valery’s idea of prose and poetry. So what was his idea? Actually Valery compared prose to walking and poetry to dancing. We understand that whenever we walk we have a purpose in mind. We don’t walk just for the sake of walking. Even if we walk without any intention to reach any destination, then also we are walking to improve our health as an exercise. The idea is to say that walking is not done without any purpose. One should keep in mind that here we are actually discussing an ordinary prose and a literary prose. Ordinary prose is what Valery compared to walking. So when we write, we write it for a purpose. There could be endless possibilities of purposes like passing information, giving orders, making someone do something that we want him/her to do, etc. Therefore, we can say that in an ordinary prose the matter of concern is the message of the content. The message of the content is not the primary concern as far as literary prose is concerned. Here, what matters is also the use of language, presentation of emotions, characters, themes, the use of style and so on.

2 / NEERAJ : UNDERSTANDING PROSE

On the other hand, we are not concerned at all with the information or instruction any dance is to provide us. We watch a dance performance because we like it, we enjoy it. Every time we go and watch a dance performance. The idea of dance is enjoyment and not information. That is why we can go over and over and watch an already watched dance performance without getting bored but same cannot be said for ordinary prose intending to give some information. We cannot go over and over through an already read informative piece unless we are sure that every time we read we will find something new, which does not happen with an ordinary prose, because with this we enter into the world of literary prose which is due for the discussion. But the case of poetry and literary prose is different. Here we have something which we call favourite piece, which we can read so many times and still claim that we want to read more. But with an ordinary prose once the meaning has been taken we would not like to go through it again, we would not like our time to be wasted in something which we already know. So we can say now that in literary prose and poetry the importance does not reside alone on what is being said but also on the medium of what is being said. Though, it would be difficult to address a direct question that what is more important form or the content, it is inevitably agreeable that both are an integral part of literary writing and together they give a sense of completeness which we usually appreciate in literary pieces. and content which makes a literature great.

We can once again understand with the help of dancing. In a performance of dance, from the very starting, every gesture holds equal importance. And it would be absurd to say that this particular gesture was more important than the others or that this one was not all important. All the gestures in a performance contribute in the completeness of a performance. In the similar way in literary prose or poetry every single words has its own importance and it contributes equally in the total effect of the work. Just as during the dance distinguishing the dancer from the dance is impossible similarly in a literary work distinguishing between the effect of message from the effect of medium is impossible. Many of us might have seen paraphrases of poems, but important it is to remember that paraphrase of a poem is not a poem. We can summarize a novel but it's not the novel. The meaning of poem is what we understand every time we go through it. The meaning might change every time we read it, there it is impossible to say that one has exhausted this very poem. Usually a literary piece has different layers of meaning. These layers of meaning are achieved by the writer who works through suggestion, allusions, imagery and other literary devices. But one must not think that the use of literary device will make a work literary. It does not quite happen. What also matters that how these devices are used. How the writer has made everything contribute towards the final effect of the piece? Every time we read it, we get new meaning. We get new aesthetic pleasure.

**Denotation and Connotation**

The relationship between words and meanings is extremely complicated, and belongs to the field of semantics. For now, though, what you need to know is that words do not have single, simple meanings. Traditionally, grammarians have referred to the meanings of words in two parts: denotation – a literal meaning of the word; connotation – an association (emotional or otherwise) which the word evokes.

For example, both “woman” and “chick” have the denotation “adult female” in North American society, but “chick” has somewhat negative connotations, while “woman” is neutral.

In other words, Connotation and Denotation are two principal methods of describing the meanings of words. Connotation refers to the wide array of positive and negative associations that most words naturally carry with them, whereas denotation is the precise, literal definition of a word that might be found in a dictionary.

**VARIETIES OF PROSE**

Prose is mainly of three kinds: (i) Descriptive Prose, (ii) Narrative Prose, (iii) Expository Prose.

**(1) Descriptive Prose:** Descriptive writing describes things as they are or as they appear to be. It can be the description of a person or a landscape or an event. The descriptive writing shows us things as they are or were seen or heard or imagined by the describer. It deals mainly with events. A good description presents the writer's observation in vivid details. It has an atmosphere of its own. Through the description, the author tries to narrate what s/he has seen or imagined.

Here is a description of Mr. Squeers in Charles Dickens' *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838-39).

Mr. Squeers' appearance was not prepossessing. He had but one eye, and the popular prejudice runs in favour of two. The eye he had was unquestionably, useful, but decidedly not ornamental: being of a greenish grey, and in shape resembling the fan-light of a street door.

**Glossary**

**Prepossessing:** Inspiring

**Puckered up:** full of folds and wrinkles

**Sinister:** wicked, evil

**Protruding:** jutting out, projecting

**Scholastic:** formal/academic

**(2) Narrative Prose:** A narrative is a description of events. It may deal with external or internal events.

**(i) Internal Events:** Internal events mean the thoughts, feelings and emotions of individuals.

**(ii) External Events:** Narrative writing tries to recreate an actual experience or an imaginary one. It is in a way that we are able to experience it mentally. Narratives can deal with the facts or fiction.

**(a) Narrative Facts:** Autobiographies, biographies, histories are narratives of fact.

**(b) Narrative Fiction:** The short story and novel come under the category of narrative fiction.

When we narrate a story we concentrate on the sequence of events. It is the action that grips the attention

of the reader. The **Ramayana** and **Mahabharata** are examples of narrative writing. In narration action, characters and setting are woven into a pattern to make it interesting. Rudyard Kipling mentioned the ingredients of a narrative in the following verse.

I keep six honest-serving men  
They taught me all I know:  
Their names are What and Why and When  
And How and Where and Who  
Thus the ingredients of narrative are as under:

- (i) What happens?
- (ii) Why does it happen?
- (iii) When does it happen?
- (iv) How does it happen?
- (v) Where does it happen?
- (vi) To whom does it happen?

All these questions are answered satisfactorily in a narrative.

**Extract from Charles Dicken's Novel *Oliver Twist*.** (1837) Here we shall read about the trial of the Artful Dodger when he is produced in court on charges of pick-pocketing.

"It was indeed Mr. Dawkins, who, shuffling into the office with the big coat-sleeves tucked up as usual, his left hand in his pocket and his hat in his right hand, preceded the jailer, with a rolling gait altogether indescribable, and taking his place in the dock, requested in an audible voice to know what he was placed in that' ere disgraceful situation for.

'Hold your tongue, will you?' said the jailer.

'I'm an Englishman, ain't I?' rejoined the Dodger; 'where are my privileges?'

'You'll get your privileges soon enough,' retorted the jailer, 'and peper with'em?'

**(3) Expository Prose:** Expository writing deals in definition, explanation or interpretation. It includes writing on science, law, philosophy, technology, political science, history and criticism.

Exposition is a form of logical presentation.

- (i) Its primary object is to explain and clarify.
- (ii) It presents details concretely and exactly.
- (iii) Expository writing explains.

People take interest in expository writing that can be read as literature. The following is a piece of expository prose:

"In the leg there are two bones, the tibia and fibula. The tibia or shin-bone is long and strong and bears the weight of the body. The fibula or splint bone is an equally long but much slenderer bone, and is attached to the tibia as a pin is to a brooch.

(Leonard Hill, *Manual of Human Physiology*)

### FORMS OF PROSE

Dividing the prose in three categories, i.e. descriptive, narrative and expository is not precise at all. To say these categories are quite broad in sense that they do not cover the preciseness of classification of prose. We do now understand all three broad classifications of the prose so let us now look at different forms of prose. Some of the forms of the prose are novel,

short story, essay, letter, travelogue, biography, diary, speeches, and autobiography.

**Short Story:** There is no single acceptable definition of a short story. We can say only that it is short, has a plot and characters and has a beginning, a middle and an end. It is 'a relatively short narrative designed to produce a single dominant effect containing the elements of drama'. A short story is not a novel in an abridged form. Instead, a short story is complete in itself. Short story has the following characteristics:

- (i) In a short story there is completeness in a few pages.
- (ii) The characters and incidents are sketched in a few effective strokes.
- (iii) A short story has intensity and a singleness of purpose.

The aim of a good short story is to make the reader feel, to make him/her enter into the experience of the characters.

**Novel:** By novel, we usually mean a piece of fiction, written in prose and of a certain length.

Main characteristics of a novel are as under:

- (i) A novel is a picture of life as viewed by the writer.
- (ii) It has a story which tells us what happened and a plot which tells us how it happened. E.M. Forster explained: 'The King died and the Queen died' is a story. 'The King died and then the Queen died of grief' is a plot.
- (iii) The plot and characters in a good novel leave a lasting impression on the reader.
- (iv) It gives us an insight into the world and ourselves.
- (v) It is full of vitality and humanity.
- (vi) It appeals to human sensibilities.
- (vii) The style varies from one novelist to another.

**Novel versus Short Story.** We can distinguish between a short story and a novel. A good short story is like a small garden. A fine novel is like a forest.

### Essay, Letter, Travelogue

**Essay:** The word 'essay' is derived from the French word **essai** or **attempt**. It "attempts" to throw some light on the subject under discussion. An essay is of moderate length.

There are two kinds of essays as under:

- (a) Informal or personal essay, and
- (b) Formal essays.

These are explained as under:

**(a) Informal Essay:** In an informal essay, there are the following features:

- (i) We can say anything we like. It should be interesting and pleasing to the reader.
- (ii) It is written in a light style.
- (iii) Its purpose is to delight the reader.
- (iv) The style is generally familiar and conversational.
- (v) It tries to inform, persuade or entertain the reader.

**(b) Formal Essay:**

- (i) A formal essay is a serious one.

4 / NEERAJ : UNDERSTANDING PROSE

- (ii) It weighs, evaluates and judges.
- (iii) It discusses the merits and the demerits of the topic in question.
- (iv) The style is objective and serious.
- (v) A good essay is balanced, thoughtful and not biased.
- (vi) The judgement is based on facts.

**Letter:** Letters are another form of prose which is non-fictional in nature. If written on a personal level they are a brilliant expression of one's self. But when written on a social level they represent the age in which they are written. In England letter writing started to be considered as a literary form the critic came in contact with the works of Seneca, Cicero, and Guevara. A letter written on social note can be considered as a literary form of prose if it explores, issues, ideas, expressions and interpretations.

**Travelogue:** Travelogue is a narrative account of a travel. Such a narrative is both interesting and informative. People have always been interested in travelling. Passion for knowledge about new places has always made men to go ahead and explore new places. Therefore the history of travelogue is as old as the history of travel itself.

**Biography, Autobiography, Diary and Speeches**

**Biography:** A biography is the story of the life of an individual. It has the following characteristics:

- (i) It tries to project an objective picture of the life of a particular person.
- (ii) It avoids the temptation either to praise too much or to be too severe and critical.
- (iii) The writer selects the salient features of a particular life and gives them a shape.
- (iv) It tries to make the reader share the hopes, the fears, the interests and aspirations of that person.

**Autobiography:** An autobiography has the following features:

- (i) In autobiography, the writer attempts to reveal selected experiences of his/her own life in retrospect.
- (ii) The picture presented in it is subjective.
- (iii) It presents the events and impression of the past as recollected by the writer while writing the autobiography.
- (iv) It cannot be a complete account of one's life as he has future to live in.

The autobiographies of Gandhiji and Nehruji are good examples of this form of autobiographies.

**Diary:** Diary writing is a non-fictional prose writing which belongs to the genre of autobiography. In diary writing the writer maintains a daily record of his/her life, thoughts and ideas in a diary. Diary provides us a good historical account of an individual's life and also sometimes provides us with the evidence of historical, social, and political circumstances.

**Speeches:** Speeches are the oral form of communication or expression of thoughts. They are written in prose and are essentially addressed to an audience. Speeches always convey the personal point of view of the speaker. A good speech is not written

with the aim to excite or rouse the audience, rather it is written with aim to inspire the audience and make them think on the same line on which the speaker wishes them to think.

**FIGURES OF SPEECH**

Let us now go ahead and look into some of the figures of speech commonly used by authors. One thing which is important to remember that identification of figures of speech is important but it is not the end, one should also learn to know that why writer has used this specific figure of speech.

**Figures of Speech:** A figure of speech is the use of a word or words diverging from its usual meaning. It can also be a special repetition, arrangement or omission of words with literal meaning, or a phrase with a specialized meaning not based on the literal meaning of the words in it, as in idiom, metaphor, simile, hyperbole, or personification. Figures of speech often provide emphasis, freshness of expression, or clarity. However, clarity may also suffer from their use, as any figure of speech introduces an ambiguity between literal and figurative interpretation. A figure of speech is sometimes called a rhetorical figure or a locution.

Not all theories of meaning have a concept of "literal language". Under theories that do not, figure of speech is not an entirely coherent concept.

Rhetoric originated as the study of the ways in which a source text can be transformed to suit the goals of the person reusing the material. For this goal, classical rhetoric detected four fundamental operations that can be used to transform a sentence or a larger portion of a text: expansion, abridgement, switching, and transferring.

**(1) Simile:** A simile is a comparison between different terms belonging to different classes for the purpose of describing one of them.

The comparison is made by the use of connectives such as 'like' or 'as'.

For example, when we say 'as sweet as honey' or 'white like snow,' we are using similes.

But if we say 'Ram is like Shyam,' this is not a simile. The reason is Ram and Shyam belong to the same class, i.e. male human beings.

**(2) Metaphor:** A metaphor is also a comparison. The writer uses an expression which describes one thing by stating another. Here two things found in a simile are absent:

(i) There is no direct comparison as is there in a simile.

(ii) There is no use of connectives such as 'like' and 'as'. For example, we can say 'The road **snaked** its way up the mountain. Here the word 'snaked' is used metaphorically. The comparison with the snake is indirect and implied.

**(3) Image:** An image is a visual picture evoked by the use of either a word or phrase. It is used to make descriptive writing more effective. An image refers to the sense of taste, smell, touch and hearing, besides seeing. An image is usually written in the form of a simile or metaphor. For example: