**Introduction to Part 2, The Victorian Age**

The time between 1837-1900 when Queen Victoria had rolled England was named the Victorian age. In that time, Britain was the greatest power, became an empire, and expanded its colonization across the world and overseas. There was also an **education revolution** in England, which made reading very common in that time. Travelers and traders travelled outside the UK to settle, to discover new cultures and other lands, or to trade and bring goods or slaves from the other colonies. They used to write about their journeys and experiences in letters, journals, and fictional stories. People in England in their homes were interested in reading to learn about the other cultures and to know what is happening outside Britain. The purpose and the style of writings became different than the Romantic era. Instead of writing about the self and nature, people wrote a lot about the society and the idea of home and abroad. Reading, for the Victorians, was not only for pleasure, but also for being in touch with the world. In an age of empire and mass literacy, home and abroad were not separable. The selected texts in this part were written for domestic readership, yet they all engage in different ways with the world outside Britain. Victorians believed that home means safety and shelter. The most important member of the house is the woman. She is the first block in the society and if she doesn’t do her role, the society will fall apart. So, in order to have a comfortable good home, you must have a good woman in the house. Social commentators like Ruskin, Patmore and Beeton argued that a safe, comfortable and good home became the most important and desirable expression of British Victorian morality and middle-class respectability. For Ruskin, the true nature of home was a place of peace, the shelter, from all injury, terror, and division, and women should devote themselves to the domestic sphere and make it their sacred duty. Women's role was to be homemakers and helpmates to their husbands. An orderly home was the best expression of a virtuous society. Patmore believes that women should be pure, chaste, devoted to her husband, and sympathetic. Beeton said that there is nothing worse than a housewife’s badly-cooked dinners and untidy ways. While the Victorians thought of home as a refuge from the uncertainty, anxiety, and political violence of the outside world, it could not be an absolutely secure environment. Despite the strong sense of social and sexual propriety, not everything was as it seemed within the Victorian home, especially in London, where high ideals about the perfect home clashed with the new realities of urban life: violence, prostitution and crime. The Victorians lived in a rapidly changing industrialized world. Imperial expansion impacted the Victorian home as were filled with foreign products from abroad. Many of African and Indian servants were brought to England to work in the Victorians houses. Also, they used to bring goods from abroad like sugar, tea, carpets and antiques. Having servants was a sign of luxury and wealth at that time, which Queen Victoria had. Imperial goods and products were seen in the Victorian homes. The empire was a mirror in which the British saw themselves as they wanted to be seen, powerful, resourceful, ambitious, hard-working, virtuous, Christian, and bringers of progress, civilization, and liberation. These issues were reflected in writing novels and displayed the ideal Victorian home where the luxurious and consistent family are under the care of the virtuous mother.

**Chapter 5**

**Introduction:**

Wuthering Heights is connected with 'home' due to its domestic settings and rural location. This chapter examines the two contrasting homes presented in the novel, their inhabitants and external landscapes. (Home): Wuthering Heights is a story of undying passion, of raw wild human nature set in wild moorland. (Abroad): its remote rural setting as quite to exclude the rest of the world.

Wuthering Heights is a novel of juxtaposed pairs. Catherine’s two great loves for Heathcliff and Edgar, the two ancient houses (Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange), the two families (the Earnshaws and the Lintons), Heathcliff’s conflicting passions of love and hate. Also, the structure of the novel divides the story into two contrasting halves. The first deals with the generation of characters represented by Catherine, Heathcliff, Hindley, Isabella, and Edgar, and the second deals with their children, young Catherine, Linton, and Hareton. Many of the same themes and ideas occur in the second half of the novel as in the first half, but they develop differently.

**Home at Wuthering Heights**

Wuthering Heights begins with accounts by Lockwood about his first experiences of his new home (Wuthering Heights). His initial attitude as a man appreciative of isolated and unrefined society is soon reduced by the rough reception. Lockwood's increasing confusion and horror were shared by some of the novel's first reviewers, too. The novel wasn't well-received when it first came out. The Spectator (a well-known magazine) published a review of the novel saying that the incidents are too rough and unpleasant to be attractive and that there were no clear moral in it. But that wasn't the only opinion. There was a wide range of responses, some of which were positive. The novel was viewed as too 'extreme' and ruined by the detailed and extended description of violence, but it was also appreciated for its originality and imaginative power. The first reviewers were working within a context where it was common to speak about the healthfulness of reading material. John Ruskin discussed reading in terms of a healthy (beneficial) or unhealthy (toxic) diet. The consumption of reading material was linked to the consumption of food, and unhealthy reading was considered to have harmful effects on the person just as the harm caused by eating too many sweets. The earliest reviewers of the novel tended to discuss the 'home' setting of Wuthering Heights more than the landscapes it evoked.

**Activity 1**

Lockwood's description of the house doesn't present it as dark, gloomy, or prison-like. The bright, un-dismal objects suggest a life of prosperity and plenty. Also, the tea, which was an expensive product at the time of the novel's setting, is an implicit sign of connections between the domestic world of the novel and the world of imperial trade abroad. Wuthering Heights has the appearance of a well-ordered home with a disordered family. Indeed the reviewer noted that the gloomy and prison-like atmosphere of Wuthering Heights was largely determined by the extensive presence of 'the brutal master of the lonely house'.

**Activity 2**

Lockwood's first visit may have a positive perspective to the interior but in his second visit, it changes to negative. There is an extreme and comic contradiction between the expectations he had after seeing the inside of the house and the rude reception by those who live in it and the most unconventional tea party that follows. For example, the exchange between Lockwood and little Catherine as he attempts to help her reach a tea can and her rude response. The comedy continues for several pages where Lockwood's social platitudes (or cliché) come up against Catherine's overt hostility, Hareton's rudeness and Heathcliff's increasing savagery. When Lockwood finds himself pinned down by Heathcliff's dogs in the snow outside, comedy has changed into something more brutal, this physical assault is followed by Lockwood's introduction to the truly gloomy part of the Wuthering Heights' interior where he spends the night. This home represents the savage way of living and chaos. The extreme events in the novel were among the features that led critics to describe Wuthering Heights as the setting of a 'drama'. For reviewers, the force of the drama taking place in that rude setting was to erase any remembrance of the moors themselves, or of the novel's other domestic location, Thrushcross Grange.

**Outside the home**

A few of the early reviews focused on the significance of Wuthering Heights as both a wild, abandoned landscape and a house, considering the connections between events inside the house and the outside weather and landscape. This wild external landscape has an extensive presence in the text. Later on, Nelly Dean tells us that Catherine and Heathcliff loved to run away to the moors as children, but there are very few scenes in the novel featuring Catherine and Heathcliff on the moors. In the novel itself, the outside landscapes tend to be symbolic of events in the story. The modernist writer Virginia Woolf noticed how the landscapes in the Bronte’s novels, their storms, moors, lovely spaces of summer weather, carry the emotion and light up the meaning of their books. The landscapes in Wuthering Heights certainly work as an expression of the themes and emotions portrayed, regardless of the fact that most of the atmospheric disorder after the opening storm takes place indoors. Wuthering Heights is not the only house, nor the only natural setting which the novel portrays, and Woolf's 'lovely spaces of summer weather' are there as well as stormy turbulence (or disorder).

**Home at Thrushcross Grange**

There are two houses in Wuthering Heights. The importance of the house at the Heights has dominated the reading experience. Grange is more sophisticated and elegant as a structure, and even the atmosphere is warm, calm, and more stable. The landscape is covered by the green grass and beautiful flowers. This may be a reflection of the inhabitants of the Grange. They are more civilized, educated and organized and may represent the idealist Victorian home. But then, Cathy and Heathcliff see the Linton's children at the Grange with their maids and servants, and they find out that there are no parents in the house. Therefore, this house doesn’t represent the Victorian home. The inhabitants of both houses don’t represent the Idealist Victorian home.

Wuthering Heights represents wildness, ungoverned passion, extremity, and death. By contrast, Thrushcross Grange represents restraint, social grace, civility, gentility, and aristocracy, qualities emphasized by the more mannered behaviour of the Lintons who live there. The names of the two houses also reinforce the contrast. While the adjective “wuthering” refers to violent storms, the thrush is a bird known for its melodious (musical) song. In addition, while “Heights” evoke raw and majestic cliffs, “Grange” refers to a domestic site, a farm of a gentleman farmer.

**Activity 4**

The first description of the Grange is Heathcliff's narration retold by Nelly. He and Catherine were running until they saw the house. First, we only get a description or account of the interior of this house. Heathcliff's account begins with the obvious contrast with the problems of the house at Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff describes it as 'heaven'. His comment conveys his child's-eye view of the gilded and brightly lit interior. The inhabitants of the Grange seem only less badly behaved than those of Wuthering Heights. Readers might reasonably wonder whether the inhabitants of this home are really more civilised than those at Wuthering Heights. However, the contrasts with the life at the Heights are clear. Such contrasts are fundamental to the opposing thematic and metaphorical patterns, the careful balance of locations and characters is what helps to structure the novel, even if some of these oppositions break down on closer examination.

**Activity 5**

Now we look at Nelly's account of the situation of the Grange and the contrasts with Wuthering Heights. Nelly's account here has lyrical descriptions of the seasons, weather and landscape that appear throughout the novel. Although Nelly's description is of the exterior landscape and the contrasting situations of Wuthering Heights and the Grange, the house is imagined as viewed by Catherine and Edgar. This viewpoint from the Grange is paralleled by the way in which readers at home viewed the world of the novel from the comfort of their own domestic interiors. Nelly's account combines precise topographical (or geographical) features of the Grange's valley setting with a poetic description of its green softness. This lyricism takes some of its pitifulness (or sadness) from the fact that Nelly is the messenger of a paradise already disturbed by a ghost from Wuthering Heights.

**Mysterious inhabitants**

Lockwood's narrative shows him as entirely disconcerted by the inhabitants of the house. He didn't live the story that happened 20 years ago. He is from the south and has no idea how the people in the north live. He doesn’t belong to the countryside and he represents us when we read the novel. He changes his idea about the inhabitant of Wuthering Heights in his second visit so he is not well trusted. Lockwood cannot understand the behaviour of the Wuthering Heights family, or even work out what their relationships are one to the other. They are strange and mysterious enough in themselves. Strangest of all is Heathcliff. His origins remain unexplained, as well as the source of the wealth and education he acquires when he temporarily disappears. He has a powerful effect on everybody else and the main emotion he inspires is fear.

Within the ordinary domestic setting, Heathcliff's strangeness stands out, despite some familiarity to his dress and manners. Heathcliff is a dark-skinned gypsy in aspect and a gentleman in dress and manners. His gypsy appearance suggests a mysterious wealth. Also his origin a mystery in a novel where genealogy (or family history) is important. The centrality of genealogy is reinforced by the constant repetition and interchange of first names as well as family names: Hareton, Catherine, Linton. Heathcliff owns but one name. Despite his marriage to Isabella Linton and the younger Catherine's to his son, Heathcliff never properly became a part the genealogical pattern. The novel's ending connects the union between the Linton and the Earnshaw and Heathcliff's role has been mainly as an external motivation for other relationships in the story.

However, while foreign in numerous ways in this novel, Heathcliff's character isn't foreign or strange in literature. He shares the characteristics of a hero, or indeed a villain, from a genre that is in contrast to the polite domestic novel. Heathcliff has been compared to the hero of The Corsair by Lord Byron. (The Corsair is a tale in verse. It narrates the story of the pirate Conrad and how he was rejected by society in his youth because of his actions and his later fight against humanity). Like the Corsair and other such literary heroes, Heathcliff is linked to one virtue and a thousand crimes. Heathcliff shares the foreignness that is highlighted in The Corsair. Byron's poem also contains parallels with Heathcliff's dark, obsessive mentality, his strange mixture of attractive and hateful qualities, and his capacity to inspire fear and destroy his enemies. Like Heathcliff, the Corsair sets himself outside social and moral boundaries. Heathcliff is portrayed as proud, courageous, thinking, challenging laws and conventions, tending towards violent utterance and action. Such qualities are typical of Byron's heroes and the figure of the hero-villains in popular Gothic romances. So, while in some aspects Heathcliff is mysterious, in others he has characteristics that are familiar to Victorian readers, and his extreme behaviour was expected. It was the emotional and physical violence that disturbed the original readers of the novel, not Heathcliff's character alone. The heroines of Gothic novels are humble, accomplished, passive, never revealing their passions except by downcast looks and blushes. While in Wuthering Height, Catherine is not a passive, no one forces her to marry Edgar, it is her choice. None of the female characters meets expected standards for a romantic heroine.

Though Heathcliff's destructive cruelty makes him the villain of the book, he never loses his status as a sympathetic character. Although one can hardly overlook his actions, it is difficult not to sympathize with him. This ambiguity in Heathcliff’s character has inspired discussions among critics, who debate whether he is the hero or villain of the novel. In some sense, he fulfils both roles. He certainly behaves cruelly and harmfully toward many of the other characters, but because he does so out of the pain of his love for Catherine, the reader remains aware of Heathcliff’s own misery as well as the misery he causes in others. The love between Catherine and Heathcliff forms the centre of Wuthering Heights, both thematically and emotionally, and it is difficult to resist sympathizing with that love. As a participant in this love story, Heathcliff never becomes an entirely inhuman or incomprehensible character to the reader, no matter how sadistically he behaves.

**The structure of Wuthering Heights**

The events that happened in the family at Wuthering Heights was in conflict with the domestic ideals, which contributed to the way the novel puts pressure on familiar literary classifications. The way that the novel treated the familiar genres increased the sense of weird disturbance that is produced in the reader by the strange-familiar events it describes. A sense of disturbed familiarity is also produced by how the novel is structured. This section considers the structure of Wuthering Heights in relation to the idea of 'home', the narrators and narrative frames, the patterns of repetition and variation between events and characters, and the novel's chronology.

**Home and structure**

For readers, their progression through the story's domestic spaces isn't regular or conventional. The novel itself is structured along organized lines and dates, both for Lockwood's and Nelly's narratives. Wuthering Heights has a highly-organized coherence. Lockwood goes to WH in 1801 and meets Nelly, who tells a story in a flashback 20 years ago. He leaves WH and comes back to end the story in 1802 after Heathcliff’s death. Alongside its tight chronological organization, the opposing locations and voices in the novel help to structure the narrative, as do the genealogical ties that are highly important to the themes of the story. There is a constant patterning of contrast and repetition between characters. Characters are related, not just through naming and genealogy, but through their similar-yet-different experiences. For example, Catherine's daughter goes to Wuthering Heights, repeating her mother's move to the Grange. These similarities contribute to a sense of a tightly organized literary structure. The formal unity of the novel has long been admired by critics. Nevertheless, the constant patterns of repetition-with-variation (repeated but different) are also disturbing, always frustrating interpretation.

**Activity 8**

There are two main narrators in Wuthering Heights, they both have a role in shaping our experience of the text. Lockwood is resident at the Grange, he introduces the novel. His narrative forms an outer frame for the whole narrative that is told by Nelly. Lockwood is a civilized and educated southerner. When he first encounters the inhabitants of the house, he thinks of them as different in their mode of living, manners and speech. Lockwood is not at home at Wuthering Heights, so he is a representative of the geographical and class location of the majority of the novel's readership. Externally, WH is a three-volume novel like any other novel that the Victorians were familiar with, but internally, Victorians encountered a confusing disregard (ignoring) of social and literary codes.

Lockwood could be seen as a representative of readers. His confusion at first is understandable, but his foppish limitations (being too much fashionable or concerned with appearance and clothes) make him the subject of satire rather than sympathy, and the central narrative is carried forward instead by his housekeeper, Nelly Dean, who takes the story back 20 years. The novel's introduction via Lockwood's encounter with Heathcliff and the second-generation characters has got the reader confused with ghosts and strange emotional overload. This prepares us for the more traumatic events that will take place in Nelly Dean's narrative after she has provided an account of Catherine and Heathcliff's childhood years.

Nelly's presence was seen as a beneficial and nurturing. She is at home at Wuthering Heights, and later also at the Grange. She knows much more about her masters than they, or we, do. However, Nelly has her own opinions of the tale she tells, and readers find it difficult to depend on and believe all her tale. Like so many first-person narrators, she is not entirely reliable. Critics have often read Nelly as the voice of convention and narrow-minded person. Nelly represents the domestic home, but home in Wuthering Heights is something other than simply kind. We don’t know anything about her or her parents. She is the voice of society. She advises Catherine to marry Edgar because he is civilized and educated, and she always stands beside him. In addition, Catherine's ghost tells Lockwood to let her into the house and asks him to listen to her story, not from other else, but she disappears with no more information. Nelly's narrative has always shown certain prejudices (or preferences), and throughout the book she harshly criticizes Catherine’s behaviour, calling her spoiled, proud, arrogant, thoughtless, selfish, naïve, and cruel. It is true that Catherine can be all of those things, but it also seems that Nelly is jealous of Catherine’s beauty, wealth, and social position. It is important to remember that Nelly is not much older than Catherine and grew up serving her. All these points make Nelly’s tale unreliable.

The reader can immediately question Lockwood’s reliability as a conveyer of facts. An arrogant and somewhat shallow man, he frequently makes funny mistakes, e.g. he assumes that Heathcliff is a gentleman with a house full of servants, even though it is apparent to the reader that Heathcliff is a rough and cruel man with a house full of dogs. Nelly Dean is more knowledgeable about events, as she has participated in many of them first hand, while this makes her more trustworthy, it also makes her more biased (prejudiced) in others. She frequently overlooks her own role in the story’s developments, especially when she has behaved badly. Nelly is generally a dependable source of information the reader is often reminded (through her mistakes) that the story is told by a fallible (flawed) human being.

**Activity 9**

There are 2 main narrators of the novel. But before we even begin on Nelly's story, another voice has interrupted when Lockwood reads Catherine's diaries. Lockwood's reading of her diary stimulates the spirit or ghost of Catherine trying to get back into the house. However, for the rest of the novel, Catherine's voice is heard only in Nelly's reported dialogue. Catherine's diaries give us (and Lockwood) some of the backstory needed to make sense of the novel's present. The fourth sound is Isabella's letter, which calls to mind epistolary novels (novels told in the form of letters). When she marries Heathcliff he locks her in WH and treats her badly. She feels that she is imprisoned. She doesn’t write details about what happened in her life. We are given only Isabella’s account without authorial comment. The multiple narrative viewpoints in Wuthering Heights mean that readers don't have an authoritative narrator who they can fully trust. This sense of "narrative uncertainty" explains why the novel has frequently been considered confused, despite its highly balanced, well-formed structure and chronological scheme.

**Chronology**

The time span of the novel is explicitly defined, starting with Lockwood's first narrative in 1801 and his closing section in 1802. Within this frame, the events that are narrated by Nelly cover a much longer period. The second half of the novel is given to the second-generation plot. The second half tends to occupy a shorter space in the memories of readers because the more exciting events are portrayed in the first-generation story.

**Romance and realism**

Wuthering Heights would have been a romance if Heathcliff alone had been a person of violent or dark passions. The word 'romance' indicates a set of expectations about what a novel should be. The novel form is often described as a hybrid. Wuthering Heights draws on many literary genres, but here, the focus is only on the interaction of realism and romance within the novel. The novel is a romance because it is a love story, because it is a work of imagination, and because it has an important relationship to the Romantic period in literature.

During the Romantic period, the notion of 'romance' was used to describe works of self-examination and imagination. Also, the term is used as a synonym for the term 'novel' and generally indicates a mode of writing that is involved with the desires and imaginative lives of its characters and readers. Wuthering Heights also has strong connections with Gothic romances (other than the Gothic characteristics of Heathcliff). Gothic novels contained an atmosphere of terror, using remote and rough settings, storms, shadows, ghosts and signs. The threat of sexual violence is generally essential to the atmosphere of these novels, in which women are imprisoned in castles and required to escape along difficult underground passages, for example, Isabella and the young Catherine's imprisonment at Wuthering Heights. Feminist criticism said that such novels should be read as expressive of the physical and psychological oppression of women in the patriarchal society.

On the other hand, there are many contrasts between Bronte's novel and the Gothic genre. Gothic heroines are usually virtuous and passive, which are not major characteristics of Catherine Earnshaw. Instead of the expected feminine contrast to Heathcliff's savagery, readers faced a rebellious heroine. The heroines scratch, tear, bite, and slap, that's how they were described. The human inhabitants of Wuthering Heights are constantly described in the same animalistic language as Heathcliff's dogs, forever fighting and devouring food. None of the female characters meets expected standards for a romantic heroine.

In Wuthering Heights, Bronte brings together the romance elements of genres like the Gothic with realistic depictions (or representations) of character, dialogue and behaviour. Emily Bronte made some unexpected changes of different modes of writing to 3 what she saw as reality. The critic George Henry Lewes found in Wuthering Heights a combination of increased description and a telling engagement with real issues and emotions, which is the basis for the realistic novel. Realism is the name given to novels that aim to provide a faithful, rather than idealized, portrayal of life. In the novel, we find the pressure of the society where the racism against the outsider, Heathcliff, and when Catherine decides to marry Edgar because he is of a high status. The idea of family, Earnshaw and Linton families and their second generation and the problems that may happen inside our homes. There are real characters who have feelings and emotions of happiness, hatred, love and revenge. The setting of the novel looks real, the weather and nature. There are many lyrical descriptions of the seasons, weather and landscape that appear throughout the novel. The dialogue between the characters and their behaviour is real.

The brutal truths which Wuthering Heights presents include the realities of domestic life, social isolation and economic dispossession. Therefore, Wuthering Heights can be linked with other novels that are more obviously concerned with 'the condition of England', particularly those dealing with the dilemma of homeless, displaced children, like "Oliver Twist".

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