

Literature review on what is the point of literature

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



Introduction

Literature, besides being a form of art used for expression, preserves customs, morals, and cultural ideals. The written word gives people a deeper context of the lives and livelihoods of people, places, and events (Kronick, 23). Literature is the best way in which history has been and will continue to be passed on from one generation to another. Each generation adds its experiences to literary accounts and passes on to the next one. For instance, people can learn and imagine, with accuracy, as much about the life and times of William Shakespeare by interacting with his literature and that of ancient Victorian writers (Tennenhouse, 14). Although technology has come up and information can be passed on through electronic media, literature will continue to hold the credibility of passing on historical information.

Literature gives a solid and detailed account of events. When authors write novels, they usually have at their disposal tens or even hundreds of thousands of words they can use to explain events, their lives, people, and places among other things they may wish. This, therefore, leads to accuracy in the manner in which a historical event, person or place is captured and recorded in history. For instance, James Baldwin, in his story "Equal in Paris" describes in fine details, how Paris was in 1949. He describes a hotel room in Paris as wretched, citing a case where he could not get clean sheets and had to ask his friend to steal one for him from another hotel (Baldwin, 103). He also mentions of bad food and intrusive French police officers. Baldwin draws comparisons of Paris and New York, of Americans and the French, in fine details that a reader can picture how life was at this time.

Literature is important because it expands human imagination and creativity.

An edition of “ Not-Knowing: The essays and interviews of Donald Barthelme” by Kim Herzinger shows that a writer can twist any set of situations in a variety of ways. He gives an account of an azalea bush, a handsome thief, a gold watch, a chastity belt and two college girls (Herzinger, 11). He imagines and creates several exciting scenarios that can progress from the situation. According to Kronick, the use of literary styles such as symbolism, metaphors, and similes among others enhances the creativity in literature and increases its applications to varying life situations (21). When people read literary pieces, they are able to have diverse opinions of the same issue and select the most plausible. Readers can borrow imagined ideas and twist them to become pragmatic solutions to real-life problems. For instance, one can borrow ideas on how to escape from a robbery incident by recalling and applying tactics s/he read from a literary piece on crime. The endless creativity and imagination that literature facilitates has led to exchange of ideas that has led to advancement of humanity.

The more literature advances, the more people are able to examine and make sense of mysterious issues such as religion, deities, the afterlife, and other related issues. A brief examination of the Biblical book of Esther reveals that, literature can play a critical role in helping people make sense of works that have deep ramifications to humanity such as the Bible. The author of this piece states that although the Book of Esther tells a simple story, it has received the most mixed views from both Christians and Jews. He points to issues such as the number of times the Persian King is mentioned as 190 while the God of Israel is not mentioned at once (612). He also faults the book for its moral tone, blaming it for propagating chauvinism

while lacking in forgiveness and mercy. Further, the author mentions that the book is a work of fiction that brings together three originally separate and independent tales. As such, Literature gives people a platform to question, ponder, and investigate issues that are widely believed to be true and that are rarely criticized (Hume, 207).

The importance of literature also stems from the fact that it helps address inequalities and injustices in the society. An edition of the literary piece “Women Writing and Writing about Women” by Mary Jacobus sheds ample light to the importance of literature in helping women attain their rights. Jacobus records Elaine Showalter’s article “Towards a Feminist Poetics”. In the article, Showalter writes about women feminists who have surmounted odds to shine in a literary world that has been dominated by men (Showalters, 24). The issues the women feminists write are on women rights and their quest for equality with men. According to Showalter, the, “literary abstractions which claim to be universal have in fact described only male perceptions, experiences and options and have falsified the social and personal contexts in which literature is produced and consumed” (Showalters, 24). In addition, through history various women writer have used the power of the pen to write and push for gender equality. Human rights activists such as Martin Luther and Mahatma Gandhi also wrote literary pieces that went a long way in pushing for human rights and equality of all people.

Many literary pieces are the source of many modern ways of passing on information. Many movies are based on stories borne in novels. For instance, Shakespeare’s plays such as The Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth and

Othello among many others have been reacted into modern movies, plays and documentaries that have entertained millions of people across the world. Many other relatively unknown authors have had their novels reenacted into blockbuster movies. This in essence shows that the importance of literature cannot be wished away and it is an important part and parcel of the modern society. Moreover, literature addresses pertinent social issues. For instance, Virginia Wolf's 1927 novel *To the Lighthouse* centers on one family (the Ramsays) to elaborate on the themes of subjectivity, loss, and perception problems, which characterize social life. All is not gloom about literature and in the face of new and exciting technology and forms of entertainment, literature has lost the appeal it had several years ago. The typical youth now prefers to read materials over the internet and spend time interacting with friends over social media instead of reading. As such, literature seems to be something that the society can do without in the face of new ways of passing information (Tennenhouse, 18). Since literature is, a powerful means of passing information, inaccuracies, gross errors and misinterpretations that get recorded in books get permanence in history and although books may be edited, the untruths contained in books are hard to erase or divert from history.

Conclusion

Literature is important in human life. Literature is the avenue through which people learn the fine details of events, people, and places since writers have at their disposal thousands of words to express themselves. Literature also expands the creativity of people as each writer can twist a given set of events to suit diverse situations. It also provides an avenue for people to

agitate and bring about social change, equality, human rights, and justice. Literature also gives people the chance to correct, question and obtain clarity on issues they find controversial such as those recorded in the Bible. In addition, literature from famous authors such as Shakespeare and other obscure ones has continued to entertain millions of people across the world by being reenacted as plays, movies, and TV programs. The downside of literature has been its relatively minimal appeal to the modern generation in comparison to new and exciting ways of passing Information. Moreover, falsehoods recorded in literary works can mislead generations and divert the course of history. In all, literature is important in advancement of humanity. Although technology has come up and information can now be passed on through electronic media, literature will continue to hold the credibility of passing on information.

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