



Shree H. N. Shukla Group of Colleges

[Affiliated to Saurashtra University & GTU]
(Vaishali nagar 2 & 3, near Amrapali Railway Crossing, Rajkot.)

SUBJECT MATERIAL

B.A. SEMESTRE-5 SUBJECT: ENGLISH PAPER NO:- 14 Chapter no: 1

Edmund Spenser(1552/53 to 1599)

Edmund Spenser, (born 1552/53, London , England—died January 13, 1599, London), English poet whose long allegorical poem *The Faerie Queene* is one of the greatest in the English-language . It was written in what came to be called the **Spenserian-stanza**.

	=> Short Questions
1	Where was Edmund spenser born?
A	in London
2	When was Edmund Spenser died?
A	13th January 1599
3	Which text of Edmund Spenser is one of the greatest in the English-language?
A	The Faerie Queene.
4	Who is inventor of Spenserian stanza?
A	Edmund Spenser

✓ Youth And Education

Little is certainly known about Spenser. He was related to a **noble Midlands family** of Spencer, whose fortunes had been made through sheep rising. His own immediate family was not wealthy. He was entered as a “poor boy” in the **Merchant Taylors ‘grammar-school** , where he would have studied mainly Latin, with some Hebrew, Greek, and music.

In 1569, when Spenser was about 16 years old, his English versions of poems by the 16th-century French poet Joachim-du-Bellay and his translation of a French version of a poem by the Italian poet Petrarch appeared at the



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beginning of an anti-Catholic prose tract, *A Theatre for Voluptuous Worldlings*; they were no doubt commissioned by its chief author, the wealthy Flemish expatriate Jan-Baptista-van-der-Noot. (Some of these poems Spenser later revised for his *Complaints* volume.)

	Short Questions answers:-
1	Spenser belonged to...
A	Midlands family.
2	How they made their fortune?
A	Through sheep up rising
3	At Merchant Taylors grammar-school, What he had studied?
A	he would have studied mainly Latin, with some Hebrew, Greek, and music.
4	Which one is an anti-Catholic prose tract?
A	A Theatre for Voluptuous Worldlings.

From May 1569 Spenser was a student in Pembroke Hall (now Pembroke College) of the University-of-Cambridge, where, along with perhaps a quarter of the students, he was classed as a sizar—a student who, out of financial necessity, performed various menial or semi-menial duties. He received a **Bachelor of Arts degree in 1573**. Because of an epidemic, Spenser left Cambridge in 1574, but he received the **Master of Arts degree in 1576**.

His best-known friend at Cambridge was the slightly older Gabriel-Harvey, a fellow of Pembroke, who was learned, witty, and enthusiastic for ancient and modern literature but also pedantic, devious, and ambitious. There is no reason to believe that Spenser shared the most distasteful of these qualities, but, in the atmosphere of social-mobility and among the new aristocracy of Tudor England, it is not surprising that he hoped for preferment to higher position.



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	Short Questions answers:-
1	What was the duties of Spenser as a sizar?
A	he was classed as a sizar—a student who, out of financial necessity, performed various menial or semi-menial duties.
2	When Spenser received Bachelor's and master's Degree?
A	Bachelor's degree 1573. Master's degree 1576
3	Who is his Best Known Friend at Cambridge?
A	Gabriel-Harvey
4	What were the qualities of Gabriel-Harvey?
A	He was learned, witty, and enthusiastic for ancient and modern literature but also pedantic, devious, and ambitious

Spenser's **period at the University of Cambridge** was undoubtedly important for the acquisition of his **wide knowledge not only of the Latin and some of the Greek classics but also of the Italian, French, and English-literature of his own and earlier times**. His knowledge of the traditional forms and themes of lyrical and narrative poetry provided foundations for him to build his own highly original compositions. Without the Roman epic poet **Virgil's Aeneid**, the 15th-century Italian **Ludovico-Ariosto's Orlando furioso**, and, later, Torquato-Tasso-Italian-poet's *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581), Spenser could not have written his heroic, or epic, poem **The Faerie Queene**. Without **Virgil's Bucolics** and the later tradition of pastoral-literature in Italy and France, Spenser could not have written *The Shepheardes Calender*. And without the Latin, Italian, and French examples of the highly traditional marriage ode and the sonnet and canzone forms of Petrarch and succeeding sonneteers, Spenser could not have written his greatest lyric, **Epithalamion**, and its accompanying sonnets, **Amoretti**. The patterns of meaning in Spenser's poetry are frequently woven out of the traditional interpretations—developed through classical times and his own—of pagan myth, divinities, and philosophies and out of an equally strong experience of the faith and doctrines of Christianity; these patterns he further enriched by the use of medieval and contemporary story, legend, and folklore.



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	Short Questions answers:-
1	Why Cambridge was important period of Spenser's life?
A	the University of Cambridge was undoubtedly important for the acquisition of his wide knowledge not only of the Latin and some of the Greek classics but also of the Italian, French, and English-literature of his own and earlier times
2	Which element was gave inspiration to write his epic 'Faerie Queene'?
A	A.Virgil's <i>Aeneid</i> , .Ludovico- Ariosto's <i>Orlando furioso</i> , and, Torquato -Tasso-Italian-poet's <i>Gerusalemme liberate</i> .
3	Which text was inspiration for <i>Shepherd's Calendar</i> ?
A	Virgil's <i>Bucolics</i>
4	What is the central theme of <i>Epithalamion</i> ?
A	highly traditional marriage ode and the sonnet and canzone forms of Petrarch and succeeding sonneteers.
5	<i>Amoretti</i> dedicated to...
A	<i>His wife Elizabeth</i> .
6	why Spenser famous for his style?
A	poetry are frequently woven out of the traditional interpretations. pagan myth, divinities, and philosophies and out of an equally strong experience of the faith and doctrines of Christianity; these patterns he further enriched by the use of medieval and contemporary story, legend, and folklore.

Spenser's religious training was a most important part of his education. He could not have avoided some involvement in the bitter struggles that took place in his university over the path the new Church-of-England was to tread between Roman-Catholicism and extreme Puritanism, and his own poetry repeatedly engages with the opposition between Protestantism and Catholicism and the need to protect the national and moral purity of the Elizabethan church. Contrary to a former view, there is little reason to believe that he inclined toward the Puritanical side. His first known appointment (after a blank of several years, when he may have been in the north of England) was in 1578 as secretary to Bishop John Young of Rochester, former master of Spenser's college at Cambridge. Spenser's first important publication, *The Shepherd's Calendar (1579 or 1580)*, is more concerned with the bishops and affairs of the English church than is any of his later work.



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The years 1578–80 probably produced more changes in Spenser's life than did any other corresponding period. He appears by 1580 to have been serving the fascinating, highly placed, and unscrupulous Robert-Dudley-earl-of-Leicester-Baron-Denbigh and to have become a member of the literary circle led by **Philip-Sidney**, **Leicester's nephew**, to whom the *Calender* was dedicated and who praised it in his important critical work *The Defence of Poesie* (1595). Spenser remained permanently devoted to this brilliant writer and good nobleman, embodied him variously in his own poetry, and mourned his early death in an elegy. By 1580 Spenser had also started work on *The Faerie Queene*, and in the previous year he had apparently married one **Machabyas Chylde**. Interesting sidelights on his personal character, of which next to nothing is known, are given in a small collection of **letters between Spenser and Gabriel Harvey** that was printed in 1580. The ironies in that exchange of letters are so intricate, however, as to make it difficult to draw many conclusions from them about Spenser, except that he was young, ambitious, accomplished, and sincerely interested in the theory and practice of poetry. In 1580 Spenser was made secretary to the new lord deputy of history-of-Ireland, Arthur Lord Grey, who was a friend of the Sidney family.

	Short Questions answers:-
1	Which was Spenser's most important part of his education?
A	Religious training
2	His first known appointment was...
A	1578 as secretary to Bishop John Young of Rochester ,former master of Spenser's college at Cambridge
3	His first well known publication....
A	<i>The Shepherd's Calendar</i> (1579or1580),
4	Spenser wrote an elegy on his late friend....
A	Philip Sydney.
5	Philip Sydney was the member of...
A	Court of Elizabeth
6	In which year Spenser was made secretary to the new lord deputy of history-of-Ireland, Arthur Lord Grey
A	In1580
7	Who led literary circle which Spenser joined?
A	Philip-Sidney



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8	What was relation between Philip Sidney and Leicester
A	Leicester's nephew
9	Spenser was praise for his critical text...
A	<i>The Defence of Poesie (1595)</i>
10	When he started work on his great epic ' <i>Faerie Queene</i> '?
A	1580
11	Who was first wife of Edmund Spenser ?
A	Machabyas Chylde
12	Which year a small collection of letters between Spenser and Gabriel Harvey was printed?
A	1580
13	Which year Spenser was made secretary to the new lord deputy of history-of-Ireland?
A	1580
14	who was a friend of the Sidney family?
A	Arthur Lord Grey

✓ Career in Ireland

Sixteenth-century Ireland and the Irish were looked on by the English as a colony, although the supposed threat of an invasion by Spain and the conflict between an imposed English church and the Roman Catholicism of the Irish were further complicating factors. Irish chieftains and the Anglo-Irish nobility encouraged native resistance to newly arrived English officials and landowners. As Grey's secretary, Spenser accompanied the lord deputy on risky military campaigns as well as on more routine journeys. He may have witnessed [the Smerwick massacre \(1580\)](#), and his poetry is haunted by nightmare characters who embody a wild lawlessness. The conflict between Grey's direct, drastic governmental measures and the queen's characteristic procrastinating and temporizing style soon led to Grey's frustration and recall. But Spenser, like many others, admired and defended Grey's methods. Spenser's [A View of the Present State of Ireland](#) (written 1595–96, published 1633), a later tract, argues lucidly for a typically 16th-century theory of rule: firm measures, ruthlessly applied, with gentleness only for completely submissive subject populations.



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For four or five years from roughly 1584, Spenser carried out the duties of a second important official position in Ireland, deputizing for his friend Lodowick Bryskett as clerk of the lords president (governors) of Munster, the southernmost Irish province. The fruits of his service in Ireland are plain. He was given a sinecure post and other favours, including the right to dispose of certain forfeited parcels of land (he no doubt indulged in profitable land speculation). For a time he leased the small property of New Abbey, County Kildare, and on this basis was first designated “gentleman.” Finally, he obtained a much larger estate in Munster. One of the chief preoccupations of the presidents of this province, scarred as it was by war and starvation, was to repopulate it. To this end, large “plantations” were awarded to English “undertakers,” who undertook to make them self-sustaining by occupying them with Englishmen of various trades. In 1588 or 1589 Spenser took over the 3,000-acre (1,200-hectare) plantation of Kilcolman, about 25 miles (40 km) to the north and a little to the west of Cork. No doubt he took there his son and daughter and his wife, if she was still alive (she is known to have died by 1594, when Spenser married Elizabeth Boyle, a “kinswoman” of the earl of Cork, one of Ireland’s wealthiest men). By acquiring this estate, Spenser made his choice for the future: to rise into the privileged class of what was, to all intents, a colonial land of opportunity rather than to seek power and position on the more crowded ground of the homeland, where he had made his poetic reputation. In his new situation he, like other undertakers, had much conflict with the local Anglo-Irish aristocracy and had limited success in filling the plantations with English families. Nevertheless, it was under these conditions that Spenser brought his greatest poetry to completion.

	Short Questions answers:-
1	In Ireland, there was conflict between...
A	English church and the Roman Catholicism
2	Spenser admired method of...
A	Lord Grey
3	Spenser’s <i>A View of the Present State of Ireland</i> discussed on...
A	a later tract, argues lucidly for a typically 16th-century theory of rule: firm measures, ruthlessly applied, with gentleness only for completely submissive subject populations.



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4	1584, which second important official position in Ireland carried out the duties..
A	Deputizing for his friend Lodowick Bryskett as clerk of the lords president (governors) of Munster
5	How much land Spenser took over for plantation of Kilcolman ?
A	3000acres
6	Elizabeth Boyle was daughter of...
A	Kins woman of the earl of Cork, one of Ireland's wealthiest men.
7	Spenser had more conflict with...
A	the local Anglo-Irish aristocracy and had limited success in filling the plantations with English families
8	What was the speciality of Kilcolman for Spenser?
A	a colonial land of opportunity, where he had made his poetic reputation.
9	Which massacre was witnessed by Spenser?
A	the Smerwick massacre
10	Which text defend Gray's method?
A	<i>A View of the Present State of Ireland</i>

✓ The-Faerie-Queene And Last Years

In its present form, *The Faerie Queene* consists of six books and a fragment (known as the “Mutabilitie Cantos”). According to Spenser’s introductory letter in the first edition (1590) of his great epic, it was to contain 12 books, each telling the adventure of one of Gloriana’s knights. Like other poets, Spenser must have modified his general plan many times, yet this letter, inconsistent though it is with various plot details in the books that are extant, is probably a faithful mirror of his thinking at one stage. The stories actually published were those of Holiness (the Red Cross Knight), Temperance (Sir Guyon), Chastity (Britomart, a female knight), Friendship (ostensibly concerning Triamond and Cambello, although these play a small part), Justice (Artegall), and Courtesy (Calidore). As a setting Spenser invented the land of Faerie and its queen, Gloriana. To express himself he invented a Spenserian-stanza, the first eight of five stresses and the last of six, whose rhyme pattern is *ababbcbcc*.



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What is most characteristic of Spenser in *The Faerie Queene* is his serious view of the capacity of the romance form to act as a paradigm of human experience: the moral life as quest, pilgrimage, aspiration; as eternal war with an enemy, still to be known; and as encounter, crisis, the moment of illumination—in short, as ethics, with the added dimensions of mystery, terror, love, and victory and with all the generous virtues exalted. Modern readers' impatience with the obscure allusions in the poem, with its political and ecclesiastical topicalities, is a failure to share the great conflict of Spenser's time between Protestant England and Roman Catholic Spain; to Spenser, the war between good and evil was here and now. In *The Faerie Queene* Spenser proves himself a master: prosody—all elements are at one with the deeper significance of his poem, providing a moral heraldry of colours, emblems, legends, folklore, and mythical allusion, all prompting deep, instinctive responses.

The poem was published with the help of Walter-Raleigh-English-explorer, who owned large lands to the east of Spenser's estate. He and the poet came together at Kilcolman in 1589 and became well acquainted with one another's poetry. Spenser implies that Raleigh persuaded Spenser to accompany him back to England to present the completed portion of *The Faerie Queene* to Queen Elizabethan-literature herself. The history of this episode is charmingly evoked in Colin-Clouts-Come-Home-Again (completed 1595), which is also one of Spenser's most effective pastoral embodiments of a provincial innocent up against the sophistications of a centre of power, with subsequent reflections on false, superficial love and the true love that finally animates a concordant universe.

Arriving thus in London with the support of the queen's favourite, Spenser was well received—not least by Elizabeth herself. The first three books of *The Faerie Queene* were duly published in 1590, together with a dedication to her and commendatory sonnets to notables of the court. Spenser saw the book through the press, made a hurried visit to Ireland, and returned speedily to London—presumably in the hope of preferment. At this time he supervised the printing of certain other of his poems in a collection called *Complaints* (1591), many of which had probably been written earlier



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in his career and were now being published so as to profit from the great success of his new heroic poem. It is difficult to believe that the many titles of poems that have not survived but were mentioned earlier in his career were not published in revised form and under other titles in his known work, for *Complaints* suggests by its miscellaneous and uneven character that Spenser was hastily bringing to the light of day nearly every last shred that he had to offer; early translations, an elegy, and the delightful mock-heroic poem “Muiopotmos” are contained in it. Another item, the beast-fable *Prosopopoia; or, Mother Hubbard’s Tale*, apparently caused the authorities to withdraw unsold copies of the volume (perhaps in 1592) because it contained a covert attack on Lord William-Cecil-1st-Baron-Burghley, who was one of the most powerful figures of the court. Nevertheless, in 1591 Queen Elizabeth gave Spenser a small pension for life.

Back in Ireland, Spenser pressed on with his writing, in spite of the burdens of his estate. In early 1595 he published *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion*, a sonnet sequence and a marriage ode celebrating his marriage to Elizabeth Boyle after what appears to have been an impassioned courtship in 1594. This group of poems is unique among Renaissance sonnet sequences in that it celebrates a successful love affair culminating in marriage. The *Epithalamion* further idealizes the marriage by building into its structure the symbolic numbers 24 (the number of stanzas) and 365 (the total number of long lines), allowing the poem to allude to the structure of the day and of the year. The marriage is thus connected with the encompassing harmonies of the universe, and the cyclical processes of change and renewal are expressed in the procreation of the two mortal lovers. However, matters are less harmonious in Books IV, V, and VI of *The Faerie Queene*, which appeared in 1596 and are strikingly more ambiguous and ironic than the first three books. Book V includes much direct allegory-art-and-literature of some of the most problematic political events of Queen Elizabeth’s reign, and Book VI’s Sir Calidore is a far less confident and effective fairy knight than his predecessors were. In the only surviving fragment of a projected seventh book (published posthumously in 1609), Spenser represents Elizabeth herself as subject to Mutability, the inexorable processes of aging and change.



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This burst of publication was the last of his lifetime. His early death may have been precipitated by the penetration into Munster of the Irish uprising of 1598. The undertakers and other loyalists failed to make headway against this. Kilcolman was burned, and Spenser, probably in despair despite the Privy-Council-United-Kingdom-government having just recommended his appointment to the important post of sheriff of Cork, carried official letters about the desperate state of affairs from the president to London, where he died. He was buried with ceremony in Westminster-Abbey close by the grave of Geoffrey-Chaucer .

	Short Questions answers:-
<u>1</u>	<i>The Faerie Queene</i> consists of six books and a fragment also known as
<u>A</u>	“Mutabilitie Cantos”
<u>2</u>	Spenser's <i>The faerie Queene</i> telling the adventure of
<u>A</u>	one of Gloriana's knights
<u>3</u>	<i>The Faerie Queene</i> discuss qualities (Virtues) like...
<u>A</u>	Holiness (the Red Cross Knight), Temperance (Sir Guyon), Chastity (Britomart, a female knight), Friendship (ostensibly concerning Triamond and Cambello, although these play a small part), Justice (Artegall), and Courtesy (Calidore).
<u>4</u>	What is Spenserian Stanza?
<u>A</u>	Spenser invented a Spenserian-stanza, the first eight of five stresses and the last of six, whose rhyme pattern is <i>ababbcbcc</i>
<u>5</u>	What is most characteristic of Spenser in <i>The Faerie Queene</i> ?
<u>A</u>	That is his serious view of the capacity of the romance form to act as a paradigm of human experience
<u>6</u>	Who helped him to published his master work <i>The Faerie Queene</i> ?
<u>A</u>	Walter-Raleigh-English-explorer.
<u>7</u>	<i>Complaints</i> suggests by ...
<u>A</u>	its miscellaneous and uneven character that Spenser was hastily bringing to the light of day nearly every last shred that he had to offer; early translations, an elegy, and the delightful mock-heroic poem “Muiopotmos” are contained in it.
<u>8</u>	In which year , Queen Elizabeth gave Spenser a small pension for life.
<u>A</u>	in 1591
<u>9</u>	What is Amoretti and Epithalamion sugges?
<u>A</u>	a sonnet sequence and a marriage ode celebrating his marriage to Elizabeth Boyle after what appears to have been an impassioned courtship in 1594
<u>10</u>	In which year, Books IV, V, and VI of <i>The Faerie Queene</i> appeared?



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<u>A</u>	1596
<u>11</u>	Where he was buried?
<u>A</u>	He was buried with ceremony in Westminster-Abbey close by the grave of Geoffrey-Chaucer
<u>12</u>	What is most characteristic of Spenser in <i>The Faerie Queene</i> is his serious view of the capacity of the romance form to act as a paradigm of human experience?
<u>A</u>	the moral life as quest, pilgrimage, aspiration; as eternal war with an enemy, and as encounter, crisis, the moment of illumination

