

POINTS TO REMEMBER IN ENGLISH LITERATURE SERIES 7

1. **'My First Acquaintance with Poets'** by William Hazlitt proved to be a turning point as this work recorded the historic moment of Hazlitt's meeting with Coleridge and Wordsworth.
2. Another collection of essays by William Hazlitt is **'Table Talk; Or Original Essays'**. The essays deal with the topics of art, literature, and philosophy. British biographer and academic, Duncan Wu called his essays masterpieces along with **The Plain Speaker** (1826).
3. Hazlitt also contributed miscellaneous essays to **The Examiner** published by John Hunt, brother of poet and essayist **Leigh Hunt**. A critique of Joshua Reynolds's theories about art appeared there marking Hazlitt's applaudable presence in art criticism.
4. Other notable works of Hazlitt are **Characters of Shakespeare's Plays** (1817), **The Spirit of the Age**, **Liber Amoris; Or The New Pygmalion** (1823), and such others.
5. **Table Talk** is the sub-category of a memoir. This kind of memoir may include a formal interview or an informal chat or conversation during get-together of some long-term value.
6. **Table Talk** may find its roots in the classical works. **Plutarch's 'Table Talk'**(Book VIII of **Plutarch's *Moralia*** contains a set of dialogues) was more about the ambience or an occasion but not the person. However, in the dialogues of Socrates and in **Symposia of Plato** and **Xenophon**, two or three individuals get together to have moral and philosophical discussion using the Socratic method.
7. **Socratic Method** usually has Socrates as lead in the discussion. With the method of interrogation, he tries to delve deeper into man's understanding of issues that are moral in nature.
8. Often at the start of dialogues, **Socrates** says that he is ignorant and knows nothing about the issue at hand. Ironically, with this start, Socrates manages to confound the participant who prides in being proficient in their field. In this manner, he manages to point out the incongruity in their arguments leading to true knowledge.
9. In **Platonic dialogues**, Socrates remained a protagonist. However, in **Plato's Laws** and **Xenophon's Hiero**, a wise man other than Socrates leads the discussion. An **Athenian stranger** is in Plato's Laws and **Simonides** in Xenophon's Hiero.
10. **Socrates Dialogues** as a literary genre in prose appeared in the fourth century BC. The moral and philosophical discussion takes place between two or more individuals applying the Socratic method.
11. Some other **examples of dialogues** are:
 - a) Augustine- Confessions
 - b) David Hume- Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion

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c) Andre Gide- Corydon

12. **The Plain Speaker** (1826) along with **Table-Talk** (1821) " represents Hazlitt's masterpiece" according to Ducan Wu.

13. In **The Spirit of the Age** (1825), Hazlitt criticized Robert Southey.

14. **Charles Lamb** (1775-1834) was an English essayist and poet. He was also a renowned antiquarian. An antiquarian is an old artefact aficionado.

15. **Essays of Elia**(1807) immortalized Lamb and so did his children's book **Tales from Shakespeare**(1823). The latter was written in collaboration with his sister Mary Lamb.

16. **Lamb** was associated with major literary figures of his times like Coleridge, Wordsworth, Southey, Hazlitt and such others. He was at the center of literary affairs of his times.

17. **E V Lucas**, considered to be the main biographer of Charles Lamb called him, " the most lovable figure in English Literature."

18. In 1869, **The Lambs**, a club was founded to carry the salon tradition in London. In 1874, its American counterpart was founded by actor Henry James Montague. It is America's oldest theatrical organization. The club honors Charles and Mary Lamb who were hosts to the actor.

19. Lamb's first publication was in 1796. His four sonnets by '**Mr Charles Lamb of the India House**' appeared in Coleridge's poem on various subjects.

20. In 1797, Charles contributed a set of blank verse for Coleridge's second edition. In the same year, he met the **Wordsworths**- William and Dorothy on his holiday with Coleridge at Nether Stowey. There he struck lifelong friendship with the duo.

21. In **Tales from Shakespeare**, Mary handled comedies; and Charles, tragedies. It became a bestseller for **William Godwin's 'Children's Library'**.

22. Charles Lamb was a clerk in the **East India Company**. While continuing his job as a clerk, he multiplied his publication of literary works. His tragedy **John Woodvil** was published in 1802 and his farce **Mr. H** was performed in Drury Lane in 1807. The performance was not received with much appreciation.

23. **Charles Lamb** in his collected essays, **Essays of Elia (1823)** used the pen name Elia. The pen name was also used by Lamb while contributing to The London Magazine.

24. **The Essays of Elia** was criticized by Robert Southey in the **Quarterly Review** (1823) titled **The Progress of Infidelity**. Southey accused him of blasphemy.

25. ' Lawyers, I suppose were children once' appears as an epigraph in Harper Lee's **To Kill a Mockingbird**. In Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrow's novel **The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society**, Charles Lamb plays an important role.

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