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**3.0 OBJECTIVES**

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In this unit we shall

- discuss what ‘post-modern’ age in literature refers focusing on the history of English literature .
- talk about the characteristics of the post-modern English literature.

**On completing this unit, you should be able to**

- understand the different shades of the meaning conveyed by the term ‘post-modern.’
- recognize the different characteristics of the post-modern English literature.
- distinguish ‘Postmodern’ from ‘Postmodernity’ and ‘Postmodernism.’

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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

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The concept of ‘modern’ in the history of English literature seems quite confusing. This difficulty is due to the fact that the term ‘modern’ has both quantitative and qualitative connotations. The quantitative notion indicates that the ‘modern’ age in English literature begins with 1914 AD, the year that marks the beginning of the World War I, and continues roughly till 1950s. The literature produced in this period shows a marked departure from the literature of the Victorian era and that is why this literature came to be known as the ‘modern’ literature. In a qualitative sense, the term ‘modern’ means the continuity of the traditional in a different form. It suggests that ‘modern’ does not mean an end of the traditional; it clearly means the continuity of tradition in a different way. If we take the qualitative notion into account, we must agree all the ages of English literature were ‘modern’ once upon a time. For example, we may say that the Renaissance was a modern age because it showed the marked differences from the preceding age. The same is the case with all other ages of the English literature. However, we often use the term ‘modern’ in “Modern English Literature” or in the “Modern Age” to refer to the qualitative literary tendencies that shaped the literature from 1914 to 1944.

One should mind the use of the prefix ‘post-’ in the phrase, ‘post-modern.’ ‘Post-,’ as a prefix, means ‘behind,’ ‘after,’ ‘later,’ ‘subsequent to,’ and ‘posterior to.’ There are certain scholars who used the prefix ‘post-’ to refer to the ‘ending’ part of an era. For example, some have used the phrase, the ‘post-Victorian,’ in this kind of sentence, ‘the novelists of the post-Victorian’ to mean the novelist that came out in the *concluding* part of the Victorian age. Thus, the phrase the ‘post-modern’ may be used to refer ‘the ending part of the modern age’ or the ‘age after the modern age.’ To avoid this ambiguity, let us clarify here only that the phrase the ‘post-modern’ is used here to signify the ‘age after the modern age.’ People write this phrase in two distinct ways: ‘post-modern’ and ‘postmodern.’ Both these are true and refer to the same thing. The *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* (sixth edition) in 2007 dropped 16000 hyphens from the English words and phrases. ‘Post-modern’ was one of those 16000 words. Thus, since 2007, we have been using the non-hyphenated word ‘postmodern’ for ‘post-modern.’ However, it does not mean that using the hyphenated term ‘post-modern’ is wrong.

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### 3.2 ‘POSTMODERN,’ ‘POSTMODERNITY’ AND ‘POSTMODERNISM’: THE NOMENCLATURES

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It is in 1979 through Jean-Francois Lyotard’s *La Condition Postmoderne* (in English: *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, 1984), we first come across the term ‘postmodern’ used in the philosophic context. Employing Wittgenstein’s model of language games and the concepts taken from the speech-act theory, Lyotard argues that there has

been a transformation of the game rules for science, art, and literature since the end of the nineteenth century. Perhaps the literary historians might have borrowed the term ‘postmodern’ from the philosophy. In literature, the ‘post-modern age’ refers to the literature and art produced after the World War II (1939-45). It hints at the body of literary and artistic works that were marked by the ethos of this particular period. It is believed that the post-modern age roughly continues up to the end of the twentieth century. Thus, the term ‘post-modern age’ signifies the body of literature influenced by the ‘condition’ or the ‘historical era’ after the World War II.

The term ‘postmodernity’ signifies a state of awareness: what we are in whether we know it or not. It is the state or the condition of being postmodern. Postmodernity is often viewed as the historical condition marks the reasons for the end of modernity. It is the state of the society that existed after the modernity. Modernity refers the state of the society that was considered progressive marked by the industrial revolution, rationality, hierarchy into public and artistic life, constant change, and the Enlightenment. The Postmodernity marks the culmination of all such progressive processes.

Postmodernism refers to a comprehensive philosophical and cultural movement. According to Stephen R. C. Hicks’ *Explaining Postmodernism* (2004), “It identifies its target—modernism and its realization in the Enlightenment and its legacy—and it mounts powerful arguments against all of the essential elements of modernism” (20-21). The existence of any prominent cultural movement raises the questions of intellectual history. Similarly, the postmodernism also marks the independent developments in the field of many cultural areas – epistemology, politics, metaphysics, physical sciences as well as our understanding of human nature and values. In simple words, the term ‘postmodernism’ can be applied to many areas of human activity, including art, architecture, literature, film and music. Thus, to understand the postmodernism, it is essential to understand the development of these independent strands and how and why they came to be woven together. In short, ‘postmodern’ hints at *the condition of a historical era* (that is the period followed by the World War II), ‘postmodernity’ refers to *what we are in whether we know it or not* (the state of being awareness), and ‘postmodernism’ refers to *self-realisation* of the different independent strands that together constitute the postmodernism.

• **Check Your Progress 1**

**Answer the following questions in one or two sentences.**

1. What does the term ‘post-modern age’ in literature signify?

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2. What is 'postmodernity'?

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3. What does 'postmodernism' refer to?

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4. What is the difference between 'postmodernity' and 'postmodernism'?

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5. Name some theorists or philosophers who have influenced the postmodern age?

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6. List some of the fields that have been influenced by the postmodern thought.

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### **3.3 'PRE-MODERNISM,' 'MODERNISM' & 'POSTMODERNISM'**

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Before going further, it is essential here to point out what kind of the shifts one finds in pre-modernism, modernism and postmodernism. Postmodernism is influenced a lot by the different fields of inquiry. What changes have occurred in these fields over the period of time would certainly help us in understanding the postmodernism in better way. It is

important to be aware of these changes because the literature of the postmodern age can be interpreted in the light of these changes only. Have a look at the following table prepared by Stephen R. C. Hicks (*Explaining Postmodernism*, 2004, p.15) and now let us understand how the postmodernism is different from pre-modernism and modernism.

	Pre-Modernism	Modernism	Postmodernism
<i>Metaphysics</i>	Realism: Supernaturalism	Realism: Naturalism	Anti-Realism
<i>Epistemology</i>	Mysticism and/or faith	Objectivism: Experience and reason	Social subjectivism
<i>Human Nature</i>	Original Sin; Subject to God's will	<i>Tabula rasa</i> and autonomy	Social construction and conflict
<i>Ethics</i>	Collectivism: altruism	Individualism	Collectivism: egalitarianism
<i>Politics &amp; Economics</i>	Feudalism	Liberal capitalism	Socialism
<i>When and where</i>	Medieval	The Enlightenment: 20 <sup>th</sup> -century sciences, business, and technical fields	Late twentieth century humanities and related professions

Thomas Docherty edited *Postmodernism: A Reader* also highlights the difference between the modernism and postmodernism focusing of their characteristics in this way:

↓↑	↔
Modernism	Postmodernism
Romanticism/Symbolism	'Pataphysics, Dadism
Form (conjunctive, closed)	Antiform (disjunctive), open
Purpose	Play

Design	Chance
Hierarchical	Anarchy
Mastery/Logos	Exhaustion/Silence
Art Object/ Finished Work	Process/Performance/Happening
Distance	Participation
Creation/ Totalization	Decreation/ Deconstruction
Synthesis	Antithesis
Presence	Absence
Centering	Dispersal
Genre/Boundary	Text/Intertext
Semantics	Rhetoric
Paradigm	Syntagm
Hypotaxis	Parataxis
Metaphor	Metonymy
Selection	Combination
Root/Depth	Rhizome/Surface
Interpretation/Reading	Against Interpretation/Misreading
Signified	Signifier
<i>Lisible</i> (Readersly)	<i>Scriptible</i> (Writerly)
Narrative/ <i>Grand Histoire</i>	Anti-narrative/ <i>Petite Histoire</i>
Master Code	Idiolect
Symptom	Desire
Type	Mutant
Genital/Phallic	Polymorphous/Androgynous
Paranoia	Schizophrenia

Origin/Cause	Difference-Difference/Trace
God the Father	The Holy Ghost
Metaphysics	Irony
Determinacy	Indeterminacy
Transcendence	Immanence

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### 3.4 POSTMODERNIST VOCABULARY:

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It is essential to know the postmodernist vocabulary to understand the postmodern literature in better way. One should be aware of the following terms-phrases in their use in the postmodernist reference:

Anti-teleological	Aporia	Black humour
Bricolage	Commodification	Constructivism
Cybernetics	Cyberpunk	Deathlessness
Decentering of the subject	Differance	Discontinuity
Fabulation	Flattening of Effect	Fragmentation
Hyperreality	Imposing of meaning	Incommensurable
Intertextual	Kitsch	Magic realism
Maximalism	Metafiction	Metanarrative
Metaphysics of presence	Minimalism	Panopticon
Paranoia	Pastiche	Permutation
Play	Plurality of power/discourse formation	Poioumena
Punctuated	Reflexivity	Short circuit
Simulacra	Simulation	Temporal distortion

- **Check Your Progress 2**

Read the Sections 3.3 and 3.4 carefully and find out the meaning of any twenty-five postmodernist terms and submit it to your teacher as an assignment.

You may refer to Tim Woods' *Beginning Postmodernism* (Viva Books, 2010), MH Abrams and Geoffrey Galt Harpham's *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (Wadsworth, 2009, 9<sup>th</sup> ed.) and any online source to find out the meaning of the terms.

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### 3.5 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

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As Prof. HA Taine suggests, any literature is the product of the race, milieu, and moment. So, one must understand the historical background that shaped the postmodern age. Since the postmodern era was influenced by the many forces, it is difficult to understand it in linear way. Let's

understand the historical background to the postmodern age focusing on a few important points.

1. *Decline of Britain*: The postmodern age begins with the end of the World War II. This period marks the decline of Britain. In the post-war times, the destruction of the European industrial infrastructure, the economic crises, the predominance of USA and its “Cold War” politics, and the Franco-German project of United Europe forced Britain to discard its pretence to world leadership. Subsequently, Britain occupied a painful secondary position among world’s nations under the powerful shadow of its previous colony, the USA, and lacked the pro-European stance. Disturbed by the two world wars back-to-back, the citizens of Britain became frustrated, disappointed, and disillusioned. They felt meaninglessness, purposelessness, and absurdity of human existence. This was the condition everywhere. This is the reason, why the postmodern literature records a sense of gloominess, frustration, and disillusionment.
2. *Civil Right Movement*: In the post-war era, certain groups (ethnic, sexual, social, cultural) felt a crisis of identity and hence they struggled to legitimise their identities in the hypocritical society. The Civil Right Movement that started in the USA in the 1960s as a revolt against the racial discrimination under the leadership of Charlotta Spears Bass, Daisy Bates, Martin Luther King, Jr., and others, made the other sections of the society for the need of ‘life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.’ The Civil Right Movement also encouraged the homosexual and lesbian communities for their rights and respected position in the society. The anti-Vietnam war movement in America and the Students’ Protests of 1968 in England and America fostered the virtue of democracy.
3. *Democratisation of Public Life*: Devastated by the offshoots of the Civil Right Movement, the western countries marched toward the democratisation of public life. This democratic atmosphere led to the education and job opportunities. The increasing employment, education, and public opportunities promoted the intellectual, creative, and critical atmosphere. This gave a rise to the publishing industries. Publishing industries facilitated the democratisation by promoting the new authors from the different walks of life. For example in the field of American literature –followed by the British, Australian and Canadian, the new authors representing the ethnic minority (the Black-Americans and the Jewish as well as the Native-American, Asian-American, and Hispanic-American), gender (women), sexuality (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered) became prominent. Similarly, the other writers from the former British colonies with different cultural background such as Salman Rushdie (India), Ben Okri (Nigeria), Chinua Achebe (Nigeria), Jean Rhys (North America), Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Derek Walcott (Columbia), Hanif Kureishi (Pakistan) and many other. Among others, the feminist and

the postcolonial texts that appealed for the democratic values dominated the literary sphere.

4. *Philosophic Interference*: Unlike the preceding literary ages, the postmodern age reflected a great interference of philosophy in the field of literature and literary theories. The postmodern literature is more philosophic in outlook in comparison to the literature produced in the previous ages. The postmodernist thinkers reject the Enlightenment philosophy. To defend their arguments, they often cite the contemporary second-tier philosophers like Rorty, Foucault, Lyotard, and Derrida. These philosophers, in their turn, cite the philosophers like Martin Heidegger, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Karl Marx. These philosophers, again in their turn, look back to the philosophers like George Hegel, Arthur Schopenhauer, Immanuel Kant, and to a lesser extent David Hume. One should remember that the battle between modernism and philosophies led to the postmodern thought. Postmodern thinking emerged at the height of the Enlightenment. Thus, the philosophic atmosphere of the postmodern age significantly influenced the postmodern literature. Hence, it is essential to know the philosophy to interpret the postmodern text in better way.

Thus, the decline of Britain and the rise of the USA as a superpower country, the offshoots of the Civil Right Movement, the different types of consciousness brought in by the democratisation of the public life, and the philosophical indulgence prepared the background for the postmodern literature. The literature of the postmodern era also reflected a marked influence of the Jean-Francois Lyotard’s idea of “metanarrative,” Jacques Derrida’s concept of “play,” and Jean Baudrillard’s notion of “simulacra.”

- **Check Your Progress 3**

Answer the following questions in short.

1. How did the decline of Britain influence the postmodern condition?

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2. What kind of change was introduced by the Civil Right Movements in the postmodern literature?

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3. Do you think that the democratisation of public life has influenced the postmodern literature? How?

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4. How philosophy and postmodernism are interconnected?

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### **3.6 CHARACTERISTICS OF POSTMODERN LITERATURE**

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The literature of the postmodern age manifested varied characteristics. Apart from the British, American, Canadian and Australian literature, the English literature witnessed the down-pouring from the many European and non-European country. John Fowles, Alain Robbe Grillet, Thomas Pynchon, Orhan Pamuk, Italo Calvino, William Gaddis, Umberto Eco, John Hawkes, William S. Burroughs, Kathy Acker, Zadie Smith, Doris Lessing, Kurt Vonnegut, Jorge Luis Borges, Samuel Beckett, Vladimir Nabokov, Chuck Palahnuik, Salman Rushdie, John Barth, and Paul Auster are some prominent among the hundreds of the postmodernist authors. These writers tried to break away from the set principles and looked for the alternatives that suit to their thinking. They tried to capture the human nature focusing on the meaninglessness, purposelessness, and absurdity of human existence. To highlight the themes related to the meaninglessness, purposelessness, and absurdity of human existence, they employed different strategies such as paranoia, maximalism, minimalism, fragmentation, hyperreality, irony, playfulness, black humour, intertextuality, paradox, contradiction, pastiche, metafiction, fabulation, poioumena, permutation, discontinuity, temporal distortion, magic realism, technoculture, randomness, excess, short circuit, etc. One may point out the characteristics of the literature of the postmodern age in the following way:

1. *Shift in Themes*: The literature of the postmodern age showed a departure from the traditional themes. Instead, it introduced the new themes and motifs that highlighted the postmodern condition. It was highly influenced by the experience of Nazi totalitarianism and mass extinction, the threat of the total destruction by the atomic bomb, and the progressive devastation of the natural environment. Hence, the literature of the postmodern age dealt with the themes related to

ecological crisis, criticism of consumerism, appeal for freedom and liberty, and changing nature. It represented the themes of meaninglessness, purposelessness, and absurdity of human existence. It also showed an interest in understanding of art and its form. It had thrown off the hierarchical distinction between the high and low culture. The postmodern age brought the art closer to the public life. In the field of poetry, the fine example of this shift is found in the works of the Beat Generation. The poets like Allen Ginsberg (*Howl*, 1956), William S. Burroughs (*Naked Lunch*, 1959), Jack Kerouac (*On the Road*, 1957), Herbert Huncke, Lucien Carr, and others rejected the standard narrative values. In the field of fiction, this change was manifested in the works of John Barth (*Sot-Weed Factor*, 1960), Robert Coover (*The Public Burning*, 1976), Garcia Marquez (*One Hundred Years of Solitude*, English trans. 1970), John Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969), Thomas Pynchon's (*Gravity's Rainbow*, 1973), EL Doctorow (*Ragtime*, 1975) and many others. In the field of drama, the shift was represented in the works of Samuel Beckett, Howard Barker, Caryl Churchill, Howard Brenton, Brian Friel and others.

2. Antiform and Indeterminacy: The postmodern literature is marked by the disjunctive and open form. It shows an interest in the merging boundaries or in the decentering of the narrative. It often dissolves the boundaries between genres and brings together diverse form and styles in one single work. This antiform focuses more on the process, performance and happening instead of the finished art work. The meaning of text is not fixed. It depends on indeterminacy. Nothing is certain in the postmodern literature. The 'play' or the 'chance' determines the connotation of the text. Vikram Seth's novel, *The Golden Gate* (1986), is the fine example of the reaction toward the fixed form. He uses 590 Onegin stanzas (sonnets written in iambic tetrameter) instead of prose narrative and tries to go beyond the boundary of the novel as a genre. The dialogues of two characters, Vladimir and Estragon, from Samuel Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot* (1953) is an excellent example of how 'indeterminacy,' 'play' and 'chance,' decides the meaning of the text. The feeling that nothing is certain runs throughout the play.
3. Intertextuality, Metafiction and Parody: Intertextuality, metafiction, and parody are the marked qualities of the postmodern literature. Intertextuality refers to the reference or parallel to another literary work. It is done through the extended discussion of the work or through adoption of its style. Intertextuality is an indication of the postmodernism's the lack of originality and its reliance over clichés. The use of fairy tales in the works of Margaret Atwood and Donald Barthelme is an example of Intertextuality. The use of the character from the medieval period, Don Quixote, in Kathy Acker's novel *Don Quixote: Which Was a Dream* (1986) or John Barth's use of Ebenezer

Cooke's poem for his work, *The Sot-Weed Factor* can be cited as an example of the Intertextuality. In simple words, metafiction means writing about writing. It refers to a literary work that is constructed as a parody to undermine literary conventions and that explores the relationship between literature, reality, life and art. David Lodge's *The British Museum is Falling Dawn* (1965), Italo Calvino's *If On a Winter's Night A Traveller* (1979), Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969) and many other postmodern work uses the device of metafiction and parody.

4. Pastiche: Pastiche means 'to imitate the style' of a work. Pastiche is generally employed to imitate a piece of literary work light-heartedly, but in a respectful manner. It can be also applied to a literary work that is a broad mixture of things – such as themes, concepts, and characters – imitated from different literary works. For example, the postmodern era also witnessed the growth of the detective fiction. Most of the detective fictions are written in the styles of the original stories of *Sherlock Holmes*, or they have introduced the main character that has a resemblance with Sherlock Holmes. This borrowing of the style or the qualities of the character is an example of the pastiche. Tom Stoppard's play, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, introduces two characters Rosencrantz and Guildenstern who originally appeared in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. The title *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* also comes from a dialogue of an ambassador who says "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead" in Act5, Scene 3 of *Hamlet*. Similarly, Thomas Lodge's *The British Museum is Falling Down*, Dave McClure's *Traveller* and many other works introduce the pastiche.
5. Irony, Playfulness, and Black Humour: As the critics like Linda Hutcheon suggests, irony is also an important characteristics of the postmodern literature. This irony is brought in by the 'playfulness' and black humour. The postmodernist works are often baleful and naïve. The meaning of the postmodern text is determined difference or delay. The meaning more depends on 'play' and 'chance.' They often present the inept characters in a fantastic, nightmarish, comic and absurd contemporary world. They treat the serious subject in the playful and humorous way. Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* (1961), Thomas Pynchon's *V* (1963), John Irving's *The World According to Garp* (1978), as well as the works of Gunter Grass, Kurt Vonnegut, John Barth and others are the good examples of irony, playfulness, and black humour.
6. Magic Realism: It is a literary device in which figures and subjects are depicted in a surrealist manner. The themes and subjects are often imaginary, somewhat outlandish, and fantastic with certain dream-like quality. Magic realism introduces the mingling and juxtaposition of realistic and fantastic or bizarre, the skilful time shifts, convoluted and even labyrinthine narratives and plots, miscellaneous use of dreams,

myths and fairy stories, expressionistic and even surrealistic description, arcane erudition, the element of surprise or abrupt shock, the horrific and the inexplicable. One generally comes across this style in the works of Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Jorge Luis Borges, Salman Rushdie, Italo Calvino, Kevin Brockmeier and Alejo Carpentier among many others.

7. Fabulation: The term ‘fabulation’ was coined by Robert Scholes in his book, *The Fabulators* (1967). Used interchangeably with metafiction, the term ‘fabulation’ relates to pastiche and magic realism. It challenges some traditional notions of literature and integrates other traditional notions of storytelling, including fantastical elements, such as magic and myth, or elements from popular genres such as science fiction. In *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (1990), Salman Rushdie uses this device.
8. Poioumena: As Alastair Fowler suggests, poioumena is a specific type of metafiction in which story is about the process of creation. Thus, the poioumena offer the opportunities to explore the boundaries of fiction and reality and takes us beyond the limits of narrative truth. Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children* (1981) that makes a parallel between the hero’s birth and the nation’s birth is fine example of poioumena.
9. Technoculture and Hyperreality: As Fredric Jameson calls it, the postmodernism is the “cultural logic of late capitalism.” It means that from the industrial society the postmodern age has entered into the age of information and technology. Similarly, Jean Baudrillard suggests the postmodernity is characterised by the hyperreality that has replaced the reality. In the postmodern age, the technology has become a central focus in man’s life. Hence, the postmodern literature has also focused on the themes that depict technoculture and hyperreality. Thus, the literature of the postmodern age is characterised by the number of the characteristics. All these characteristics together mark the departure of the postmodern literature from the traditional literature.

• **Check Your Progress 4**

Read the following statements and write, “T” or “F” accordingly for “True” or “False” statements in the space provided.

1. The term ‘post-modern age’ signifies the body of literature influenced by the ‘condition’ or the ‘historical era’ after the World War II. \_\_\_\_\_
2. ‘Postmodernism’ signifies a state of awareness: what we are in whether we know it or not. \_\_\_\_\_
3. ‘Postmodernity’ and ‘postmodernism’ refers to one and the same thing. \_\_\_\_\_
4. The term ‘postmodernism’ can be applied to many areas of human activity, including art, architecture, literature, film and music. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Paradigm, hypotaxis, determinacy, and transcendence are the features of the postmodernism. \_\_\_\_\_
6. The decline of Britain did not have any influence on the postmodern condition. \_\_\_\_\_
7. The Civil Right Movements are responsible for the emergence of the different literary canons in the postmodern literature. \_\_\_\_\_
8. The democratisation of public life has a marked influenced on the postmodern literature. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Understanding of the different philosophical threads is essential for the better understanding of the postmodern literature. \_\_\_\_\_
10. The postmodern literature is marked by the disjunctive and open form. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Metafiction refers to the reference or parallel to another literary work. \_\_\_\_\_
12. Pastiche is generally employed to imitate a piece of literary work light-heartedly, but in a respectful manner. \_\_\_\_\_
13. The term ‘fabulation’ is used interchangeably with metafiction. \_\_\_\_\_
14. Poioumena is a specific type of metafiction in which story is about the process of creation. \_\_\_\_\_
15. The postmodern literature also deals with the themes of technoculture and hyperreality. \_\_\_\_\_

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### 3.7 LET US SUM UP

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In this unit, you have learnt –

- idea of the ‘postmodern’ and the ‘postmodern’ literature
- the difference between the ‘postmodern,’ ‘postmodernity,’ and ‘postmodernism.’
- the historical background of the literature of the postmodern age.
- the literary characteristics of the postmodern literature.

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### 3.8 KEYWORDS

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- Aporia /ə'pɔ:riə/ (noun) An irresolvable internal contradiction or logical disjunction in a text, argument, or theory.
- Bricolage /,brɪkə'li:ʒ/ (noun) Construction or creation from a diverse range of available things in art and literature.
- Cybernetics /saɪbə'netɪks/(noun) The science of communications and automatic control systems in both machines and living things.
- Cyberpunk /'saɪbəpʌŋk/ (noun) A genre of science fiction set in a lawless subculture of an oppressive society dominated by computer technology.
- Fragmentation /frægmen'teɪʃ(ə)n/ The process or state of breaking or being broken into fragments.

- Incommensurable /,ɪnkə'menʃ(ə)rəb(ə)l/ (mass noun) Not able to be judged by the same standards; having no common standard of measurement.
- Intertextual /,ɪntə'tɛkstʃʊəl/ (adjective) Relating to or involving a relationship between texts, especially literary ones.
- Kitsch /kɪtʃ/ (mass noun) Art, objects, or design considered to be in poor taste because of excessive garishness or sentimentality, but sometimes appreciated in an ironic or knowing way.
- Metanarrative /'metənərətɪv/ (noun) An overarching account or interpretation of events and circumstances that provides a pattern or structure for people's beliefs and gives meaning to their experiences.
- Paranoia /,pərə'nɔɪə/ (mass noun) A mental condition characterized by delusions of persecution, unwarranted jealousy, or exaggerated self-importance, typically worked into an organized system. It may be an aspect of chronic personality disorder, of drug abuse, or of a serious condition such as schizophrenia in which the person loses touch with reality.
- Permutation /pə:mju'teɪʃ(ə)n/ (noun) Each of several possible ways in which a set or number of things can be ordered or arranged.
- Simulation /sɪmjʊ:'leɪʃ(ə)n/ (noun) Imitation of a situation or process.

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### 3.9 BOOKS SUGGESTED:

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#### Dictionaries for Reference

1. *English Oxford Living Dictionaries*: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com>
2. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*
3. *Shorter Oxford Dictionary*

#### Suggested Reading

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❖ ANSWERS

• **Check Your Progress 1**

1. The term ‘post-modern age’ in literature signifies the body of literature influenced by the ‘condition’ or the ‘historical era’ after the World War II.
2. ‘Postmodernity’ means a state of awareness: what we are in whether we know it or not. It is the state or the condition of being postmodern.
3. The term ‘postmodernism’ refers to *self-realisation* of the different independent strands that together constitute the postmodernism.
4. ‘Postmodernity’ refers to *what we are in whether we know it or not* (the state of being awareness), whereas ‘postmodernism’ refers to *self-realisation* of the different independent strands that together constitute the postmodernism.
5. Jean-Francois Lyotard, Jean Baudrillard, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Fredric Jameson, Nietzsche, Gilles Deleuze, Pierre-Félix Guattari, Emmanuel Lévinas, Richard Rorty, and Slavoj Žižek are some of those theorists or philosophers who have influenced the postmodern age.
6. The postmodern thought has influenced almost all the field of human inquiry. Some notable fields are – epistemology, politics, metaphysics, physical sciences as well as our understanding of human nature and values.

• **Check Your Progress 4**

- (1) T, (2) F, (3) F, (4) T, (5) F, (6) F, (7) T, (8) T, (9) T, (10) T, (11) F, (12) T, (13) T, (14) T, (15) T.