

Dr. Samuel Johnson

**Preface
To
Shakespeare**

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RAMA BROTHERS

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- (1) What are the grounds of Johnson's admiration for Shakespeare as a dramatist and how far does his reasoning convince you ?

Or

What, according to Johnson, are the merits of Shakespeare's plays? To what extent do you agree with his observations in this respect ?

Or

How does Johnson reply to the following question posed by him ? "It is proper to inquire by what peculiarities of excellence Shakespeare has gained and kept the favour of his countrymen." How far is Johnson justified in his reply ?

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- (2) What, according to Johnson, are the faults of Shakespeare ? To what extent do you agree with him in this respect ?

Or

(vii)

"Shakespeare with his excellencies has likewise faults sufficient to obscure and overwhelm any other merit." How does Johnson illustrate this criticism ?

Or

What are the charges that Johnson brings against Shakespeare as a dramatist and with what justification ?

- (3) How does Johnson defend Shakespeare's mixing of tragic and comic elements and how far do you agree with him ?

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Or

Discuss Johnson's defence of Shakespeare against the charge of his mingling the tragic and comic elements, indicating the historical background of the matter.

- (4) Discuss Johnson's view regarding the "three unities" in drama with special reference to Shakespeare's disregard of the unities of time and place.

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Or

What it meant by the "three unities" relating to the construction of a dramatic plot ? How does Johnson comment on Shakespeare's practice in this regard and how far do you agree with him ?

- (5) Bring out the salient points of Johnson's judgment of Shakespeare as stated in the *Preface*, adding your comments on each.

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Or

Write a critical note on Johnson's views on Shakespeare's dramatic works.

- (6) Discuss the contribution of Johnson to Shakespearean criticism.

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Or

Write a note on the merits and demerits of Johnson's *Preface to Shakespeare*.

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- (7) What opinion have you formed of Johnson as a critic of Shakespeare ?

Or

Discuss Johnson's critical estimate of Shakespeare and the principles that guided him in his editing of Shakespeare's plays. ...

- (8) Write a brief essay on Johnson's norms of critical evaluation in the light of your reading of his *Preface to Shakespeare*. ... 158

Or

Consider Johnson's *Preface to Shakespeare* as an illustration of the neo-classical tenets of literary criticism to which Johnson subscribed.

Or

What is the critical position and attitude adopted by Johnson in his approach to Shakespeare's plays as stated in his *Preface to Shakespeare*. ... 162

- (9) To what extent is Johnson's Shakespearean criticism distorted by the ethical assumptions of the age of which he was one of the main spokesmen ?

Or

"He sacrifices virtue to convenience." Examine this dictum of Johnson regarding Shakespeare, commenting on the validity of the criterion here implied.

Or

Discuss the didactic note in Johnson's approach to Shakespeare's plays in his *Preface*. ... 166

- (10) Discuss Johnson's editorial methods in respect of Shakespeare's plays.

Or

What does Johnson tell us about his procedure in editing Shakespeare's plays ? .. 169

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