

2015 specification
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Paradise Lost Book 9

Comprehensive Guide for A Level

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Teacher's Introduction

This is a study guide designed to help students with their A Level examination revision, devoted wholly to John Milton's *Paradise Lost* Book 9. It covers a range of summaries which will help students in developing the knowledge and skills required by both Eduqas and WJEC exam boards.

Remember!

Always check the exam board website for new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.

What is Included?

The guide covers the historical and social background of both Milton and his times to aid a deeper understanding of the text. It also covers its most important political, social and literary interpretations. The chapters include a section-by-section analysis of the poem. This guide also includes analyses of the characters, relationships and narrative voice of the poem, along with the poem's form and genre. A section of this guide is also dedicated to the highly important language techniques used in the poem, the understanding of which will help students in carrying out their own analyses. There is also a chapter dedicated to the key themes present in the poem to help students to identify these crucial ideas themselves as they reread the text.

The more critically focused chapters on *Paradise Lost*'s reception and the literary approaches to Milton's work constitute another section. It is designed to encourage students to think critically about *Paradise Lost* Book 9 and to point out what they need to take into account when producing informed critical responses to essay questions.

Lastly, there is a glossary and an exam preparation section which includes my hints and tips on how to sit an exam.

This guide includes discussion points at the end of most chapters, designed for debates and discussions in seminar-style classes or equally useful to set as homework. They are particularly useful for encouraging students' original thought and an ability to search for literary and contextual meanings in the given text. This ability will improve students' confidence in an exam, when they will be required to analyse a passage with a degree of creativity.

In the activities section following most of the chapters, there are also some general essay questions, which could be used as homework or in class. Students should acquire confidence in writing exam-style essays by practising producing timed, exam-style responses in class.

The proposed activities also include a short text transformation exercise to demonstrate certain theatrical aspects of Milton's poem.

Lastly, all of the key quotations mentioned in this guide are highlighted in bold, to make reading and looking for quotations more comfortable.

We hope that teachers will enjoy using this guide in their *Paradise Lost* Book 9 classes and we hope they will find it useful to both themselves and their students in preparation for Eduqas and WJEC examinations.

Edition of the Text

In preparing this guide, we have used a Milton anthology entitled *The Poetical Works of John Milton. Volume 1: Paradise Lost*, published by Oxford Clarendon Press in 1952. We would, however, suggest using the latest Oxford World's Classics edition, which is more widely available and contains concise explanatory notes on each page to help the readers with the understanding of Miltonian language and the obscure references. It also contains a useful introduction by Stephen Orgel.

For students who wish to explore the text in more depth, we would recommend the Norton Critical Edition. It is an edition which offers more extensive knowledge of the text's critical readings over time. It is more suitable for university-level students; however, those particularly interested in the subject will find the collection of essays included highly useful and inspiring.

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* resulting from minor specification changes, suggestions from teachers and peer reviews, or occasional errors reported by customers

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Using This Guide

Background on the Text

The resource starts with this section in order to introduce you to the author of the period in which it was written. It is crucial that you understand the socioeconomic factors that have significant influence on *Paradise Lost* Book 9.

Critical Reception

This comparison of other writers' opinions is here to broaden your knowledge of the text in the literary world.

Plot Summary

We have here provided a thorough summary of the poem's events to aid the students.

Section-by-section Analysis

This section contains key analysis of Book 9, in which the poem is divided into several sections explored in depth. Each section contains an overview of the key characters and events, followed by an in-depth analysis of the language and devices used by Milton, complete with key quotations. To aid students' understanding of the terminology they will be expected to engage with in their analysis, there is a variety of activities in each section to guide the students' discussion and to help them to practise writing essays and perfect their exam technique.

Structure and Form

The form and structure of the text is explored, which is a starting point of many topics. The problem with *Paradise Lost* Book 9 starts when we realise that this epic poem does not have a typical structure associated with the literary form of the epic poem. It does not have a traditional hero or an ultimate antihero in place of the hero we would expect from such a text. From this, we can see the issues that we, as literary critics, need to analyse and contest.

Characters

Later you will find the characters chapter. Adam, Eve, Satan and God are all elusive characters, each with their own sympathetic qualities. Disturbingly, we find that perhaps the most pitiable character is not Satan, but Eve, for the religious readers of Milton's times. This section also uncovers the curious relationship between Adam and Eve, the *Bible*'s first married couple.

Author vs Narrator

Next is the chapter on the relationship between the author and narrator of the text. Who is the narrator of the poem? Whose views are being manifested? Is it the author narrating?

Relationships

To accompany the students' understanding of the characters featured in the poem, this section explores the two key relationships in the poem – the marriage of Adam and Eve, and Eve's relationship with Satan.

Genre

This section provides an outline to the genre and sub-genre categorisations of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. It includes an analysis of Milton's presentation of the characters within the poem, along with an analysis of the poem as a prototype of the Romantic genre of writing.

Language

You will also find a chapter dedicated to the language and its effects. Miltonian language is often criticised because of its seemingly unnatural structure, but it is worth a closer look – the language is used to convey meaning and mood.

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Key Themes and Ideas

There is a section on the most important ideas and themes present in *Paradise Lost* and various interpretations of Milton's epic poem. An understanding of these is key to success in your exam.

Contextual Analysis

This section covers the vital contextual background needed to understand Milton's poem. This section includes information on the impact that the monarchy and civil war of the 17th century had on Milton's writing of the poem. Furthermore, the contextual analysis covers the 17th century, including the prominence of Puritanism, along with personal context regarding Milton's views of marriage, and how this affected his presentation of women within the poem.

Literary Approaches

Finally, this section provides two varying literary approaches that students may find useful when analysing the poem, including a Feminist and a Structuralist reading.

Glossary

Lastly, there is a glossary to help you with any new or difficult terms which I have used throughout the guide. It is important that you memorise as many as you can – using formal terms improves your response and makes your essays even more sophisticated.

Exam Help

The very last section of the guide is Exam A&E! This chapter provides helpful exam tips and a quick graphic recap of what this guide covers.

Answers

To conclude this guide, we have provided some sample answers for the various questions in the guide. These answers should serve as indicative content for the students' responses. Students' own creative response are strongly encouraged.



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The Specification

This resource is directed at students who are preparing for their Eduqas and WJEC designed in compliance with the requirements of both exam boards.

This resource addresses the following Assessment Objectives, as outlined by both

- AO1: Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression
- AO2: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts
- AO3: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts of literary texts
- AO5: Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations (Eduqas students only)

Specifications and Expectations of the WJEC A Level Exam: Unit 3: Section A

In this exam, candidates have **two hours** to answer **two questions**. For Section A, *Paradise Lost* Book 9 features as a text of choice, candidates are required to answer **one question** in **two separate parts**. The first part of this question, worth a total of **15 marks**, will require an extract from the poem, in light of a chosen topic or theme. The second part of this question, worth a total of **15 marks**, requires the candidate to engage with Milton's text as a whole, in light of a chosen topic or theme.

Section B of this exam, in which *Paradise Lost* Book 9 does not feature as a text of choice, candidates are required to compare two unseen poems.

For the first part of the question answered in Section A, it will be expected of students to demonstrate Objectives 1 and 2 only. For the second part of the question, it will be expected of students to demonstrate Objectives 1, 2, and 3.

This particular exam is an 'open-book' exam, therefore, it will be permitted for students to bring a ('clean') copy of *Paradise Lost* into the examination for reference.

Specifications and Expectations of the Eduqas A Level Exam: Component 1

In this exam, candidates have **two hours** to answer a total of **two questions**. For Section A, *Paradise Lost* Book 9 features as a text of choice, candidates are required to answer **one question** in **two separate parts**. The first part of this question, worth a total of **20 marks**, will require an extract from the poem, in light of a chosen topic or theme. The second part of this question, worth a total of **40 marks**, requires the candidate to engage with Milton's text as a whole, in light of a chosen topic or theme.

Section B of this exam, in which *Paradise Lost* Book 9 does not feature as a text of choice, candidates are required to select **one question from a choice of two**, in which they are expected to engage with two poetry texts.

For the first part of the question answered in Section A, it will be expected of students to demonstrate Objectives 1 and 2 only. For the second part of the question, it will be expected of students to demonstrate Objectives 1, 2, 3, and 5.

This particular exam is an 'open-book exam', therefore, it will be permitted for students to bring a ('clean') copy of *Paradise Lost* into the examination for reference.

Remember that at A Level, you already have outstanding literacy skills. The purpose of this resource is to help you to think about the text studied so that you can tackle these AOs with confidence. But substantial revision will go a long way in your exams.

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Background on the Text

John Milton was born in 1608 in London to a wealthy family of a composer and scrivener, John Milton senior. Milton was brought up a Puritan, both by his parents and tutors at St Paul's School in London. His strong appreciation for the religious values and Puritan traditions influenced his writing and remained a recurrent theme of his works.

Milton studied humanities at St John's College University and graduated with a master's degree in 1632. Later, in 1638, he started travelling around Europe, visiting France and Italy, where he was exploring classical art and literature. Despite his family's wishes, he gave up his prospects of training to become an Anglican priest in favour of becoming a poet. To support himself financially, he became a private tutor.

He saw his poetry as a means of serving God and propagating Puritan ideas among his readers. His aim as a poet was to convey messages of the ways of God, to praise morality and to picture disdain for sensuality and baseness.

Milton's poetical ambition was to write epic poetry referring to the literary traditions of ancient Greece and to classical texts such as *Odyssey* or *Iliad*.

He was a keen supporter of the republican movement and in opposition to the royalists he also published political material, such as the strongly republican *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*. His radical thoughts were highly controversial at the time – he was admired by the republicans for his anti-royal works, but disliked by the royalists. He also published works touching on educational issues, such as the morality of divorce and cases in which it could be acceptable. Furthermore, he fought censorship in literature, by publishing tracts on the free use of Latin in these works helped Milton convey his messages to other scholars across the European continent – Latin was, at the time, the international language.

His vast knowledge of foreign languages (French, Italian, Latin, Greek and German) and his literary artistry led the political leader Oliver Cromwell to appoint Milton as Secretary for Foreign Tongues (specialising in Latin) in the Commonwealth of England – the republic after the execution of Charles I. After the Civil War broke out in 1642 and King Charles I was executed, Milton devoted himself almost wholly to the publishing of republican manifestos and pamphlets and his poetry. He thus put his ideas of an epic religious poem about the fall of man as

After Cromwell's death in 1658 there was a general confusion around the government and what the society should work. The society did not want any more political upheaval but rather the return to 'normality'. As a result of a parliamentary agreement, the restoration of monarchy came back from exile and was crowned King Charles II.

This return to the monarchy disappointed republicans, such as John Milton, disillusioned and continued with his radical views on the lack of need for a monarch in England. Republican thought was still prevalent in the society and therefore, as a result of his bold writing, he had been imprisoned for a short time. Then, after the years of his civil service and writing, Milton's life finally regained its stability around 1663 when he married for the third time. His life finally regained its stability around 1663 when he married for the third time. He dictated *Paradise Lost* to his daughters. As well as a fruitful effect of Milton's peace, it could also be an outcome of his Restoration despair.



A portrait of John Milton

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Early Criticism

Andrew Marvell (politician, poet and satire writer)

*That Majesty which through thy Work doth Reign
Draws the Devout, deterring the Profane.
And things divine thou treat'st of in such sort
As them preserves, and thee immortal
At once delight and horror on us seize,
Thou signify'st such gravity and ease;
...
Thy Verse created like thy Theme sublime,
In Number, Weight, and Measure, needs not Rime.*
(Marvell, 1674, in Dyson (ed.), 1973, p. 35)

Andrew Marvell, our earliest critic, sees *Paradise Lost* as praise for the good and 'Profane'. He says that Milton depicts the celestial and the divine tastefully and in line with the effects of Milton's poem on the reader ('at once delight and horror on us seize'). Marvell, in other words, form, to decide that Milton's work is of such a high moral and literary standard, it is its greatness.

Joseph Addison (politician, man of letters and playwright)

*There is another objection against Milton's fable... namely, That the hero in it is unsuccessful, and by no means a match for his enemies. This gave occasion to some reflection, that the devil was in reality Milton's hero. The *Paradise Lost* is a poem, and he that looks for an hero in it, seeks for that which Milton never needs fix the name of an hero upon any person in it, it is certainly the Messiah is in the *Paradise Lost* and the masterly beauties which we discover in Homer.*
(Addison, 1712, in Dyson (ed.), 1973, p. 37)

This excerpt shows the early critics' concern about the lack of a definitive epic hero in the epic poem. The critic, Joseph Addison, talks about other critics' opinions about the poem and addresses these critics' fears with the possibility that the epic hero of the poem is the devil. Addison says that Milton has never intended the poem to have a hero, and if the readers need to identify a hero, they should identify the Messiah (rather than Satan or the fallen man). Lastly, Addison declares the poem's aspirations to resemble a great ancient epic. He says it is of the same artistic value as Homer or Virgil.

The early critics, we can see, are mostly concerned with reviewing the poem and its reception, as well as with uncovering its possible interpretations.

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Romantic Criticism

William Blake

Note: The reason Milton wrote in fetters when we wrote of Angels & God, of Devils & Hell is because he was a true poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it. (Blake, 1712, in Dyson (ed.), 1973, p. 44)

William Blake, one of the great Romantic poets and artists, admires Milton for the reason that 'he was a true poet', he says. He recognises Milton's striking sympathy with his diabolical Milton is 'of the Devil's party without knowing it'. This, however, is not in any way as if he is genuinely fascinated by Milton's Satan, as well as his approach to biblical events and the

William Wordsworth

Milton wrote chiefly from the Imagination which you may place where you please in the human veins. Him the Almighty Power hurled headlong... (Wordsworth, 1808, in Dyson (ed.), 1973, p. 45)

To William Wordsworth, the imagination is the force which inspired and propelled his works. To Wordsworth, one of the most influential Romantics, the imagination is a divine influence and it is essential for human understanding and creation of poetry. According to him, imagination is nearly a divine force itself.

We can, therefore, understand how the reception of *Paradise Lost* changed in Romanticism. One of the greatest poems in English literature, but Milton's skill is seen to be owed to religious rapture or scholarship. This Romantic criticism portrays a shift in literary criticism.

Twentieth-century Criticism

Basil Willey (Cambridge University Fellow, English literature scholar and writer)

*With [Milton] the Renaissance idea, always a part of the Renaissance theory of literature, was imported. It was to be 'doctrinal and exemplary to a nation'... The *Paradise Lost* of the seventeenth century, then, may be attributed in the first instance to the Renaissance idea of the heroic poem, alive as ever though hit by the lightning of the new heaven to which the true scholar might rise', at last found its destined English home.* (Willey, 1934, in Dyson (ed.), 1973, p. 76)

The above example of early twentieth-century criticism shows us how the reception of the poem changed over time, but it also illustrates how many of the poem's aspects remain a fascinating area of study.

Willey's criticism shows us that modern critics analyse a text with a focus on its historical context in the examples of Milton's early criticism. Willey relies wholly on the context of Renaissance literature. He concludes with praising Milton for becoming a writer of the Renaissance writing and the English heroic poem. He is only able to do so because he can perform a historical analysis and look back at the Renaissance.

It is interesting to note that Willey's criticism shares its focal points with the earlier criticism. It is concerned with the structure and form of the poem and makes it a basis for the biographical criticism.

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Plot Summary

Before we start analysing the structure, language, characters and other aspects of section-by-section synopsis of the text. I will divide the poem into chunks and describe which part of Book 9. Book 9 is the longest book in *Paradise Lost* and it is a difficult will help you with your first reading of it.

Lines 1–13 The narrator informs the reader that, from now on, his narrative will be telling a story of 'breach / Disloyal on the part of Eve'. The narrator states that this story concerns all the people, as it is 'Miserable' and 'our world forever'.

Lines 13–47 The narrator declares that his 'Sad task' of telling a story of the fall is as 'Heroic' in nature as the Greek and Roman heroic tales. He seeks the 'Celestial Patroness' for inspiration and help with writing of his history, to Muses, or the Greek goddesses of artists' inspiration. He declares himself 'studious' in the art of writing and therefore needs this celestial help.

Lines 47–99 As 'The Sun was sunk' and night falls in Paradise, Satan, who was 'fearless return'd'. We are told that he returns after eight nights without alarming the Angel guards. Satan then circumnavigates the garden whose form he can adopt as a disguise. He finally finds a sleeping 'suttlest Beast of all'.

Lines 99–178 We are presented with Satan's first monologue and therefore with his thoughts and feelings. He laments being punished by God and expelled from Eden because he does not have access to the 'Fruit of the Tree of Life'. He is in torment, as he admires the 'Earthly' and magnificence of the garden, but has a sense of fulfilment by contemplating the 'acts of destruction'. He is envious of God's beloved creatures and wishes he created them so that they can enjoy the Earth, which he has denied this possibility. He believes God created them to give them the pleasures of Paradise out of spite, to punish him. He remembers that he refused to be obedient to God and this was his punishment. He is appalled by the injustice of this punishment and swears that he is 'best repaid'.

Lines 178–191 Satan, who is at this point a spirit, approaches the sleeping, unaware Eve through the snake's mouth. The serpent's slumber is not disturbed by Satan's diabolic spirit.

Lines 191–225 It is morning in Paradise and we are introduced to 'the human pair' and their prayer to God, 'the Creator'. All the flowers and plants are described as giving their 'silent praise' in form of their 'grateful Smell'. The image is given by the narrator that Adam and Eve plan their daily gardening tasks. Eve is introduced in Book 9 and tells Adam that their work is too demanding for them. She says that until there are more people to help them, they should divide the areas of the garden to keep up with their gardening labours more easily. She suggests that separating will provide them with more enjoyment and leisure for themselves and even more keep them close to each other afterwards.

Lines 225–389 Adam gives his first monologue as he opposes Eve's wish for them to separate. He loves her lovingly and with respect, but he reminds her of her domestic duty and the commandment that they shall not separate. He argues God did not create them to work hard, but to enjoy each other's companionship in the beauty of the garden. He admits that 'solitude sometimes is best societie'. Although, he is more vulnerable to the possible attack of their 'malicious foe', of the serpent. Therefore, Adam tries to convince Eve that she should stay by his side and duty to protect his wife against any 'danger or dishonour'.

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Eve is slightly offended by the fact that Adam doubts her 'firmness' against their foe. Adam then assures Eve of his highest regard for his wife and she changes her mind and stays close to Adam for the sake of her safety, even with the enemy.

Eve tries to convince Adam that it is wrong to 'dwell / In narrow thoughts' and that it is impossible for the couple to live a happy life if they remain in Eden. She states that it is wiser to face the enemy, to resist him, to gain 'dominion' over the inevitable confrontation. Adam finally surrenders to Eve's wish to depart, reminding her to follow her virtues and remain true to her duty.

Eve approaches Satan's permission and words of warning and she is still virtuous in an event of meeting the enemy. She then takes Adam's hand and departs.



Lines 386–531 Adam watches Eve disappear, wishing she would stay. The narrator expresses his expectation of her sin. He explains that Eve is being led to an 'am' and 'Shades', never to return with her previous 'Innocence', 'Faith' back to the image of the serpent, who is now 'on his Quest' again. He learns that Satan observed the couple before, but wished to find a way to seemed to him. He is, therefore, glad to see Eve on her own.

Satan contemplates Eve's beautiful appearance and the contrast between her intentions, and Eve's 'graceful Innocence'. Despite his admiration for her, he burns, especially when he sees the greatness of God's creation and how he abandon his vengeful plan.

We are presented with Satan's second monologue in which he complains about how he can't enjoy the Earth's wonders. He also reiterates the images of his pain and inability. He also repeats his declaration of his fate and proclaims his intention to revenge himself on God.

Satan then moves towards the Garden of Eden, exposing his beauty and his power to the serpent.

Lines 531–646 Satan begins his rhetoric speech with a large amount of flattery, trying to win Eve's trust. He addresses Eve as 'a Goddess among Gods'. Eve is astonished by his human language and reasoning. She asks him to explain what force he has, as she is not aware of any the other of God's creatures being able to speak. Satan falsely that he used to be a mere animal without any sense until he was brought to the Garden of Eden and, encouraged by the beauty of its fruit, he ate of the fruit. He says that the other creatures tried to taste the fruit as well, but he was the only one who succeeded. Immediately afterwards, he tells Eve, he gained the powers of reason. Satan uses his flattery, which Eve detects as 'overpraising', but she is drawn into the serpent's tale despite the implausibility of his tale (the snake being the only creature to eat from a tall tree seems to us a lie). Eve is drawn into the serpent's trap and reveals which tree he means. Satan promises to take Eve to the tree and show her the miraculous fruit, as long as she agrees to follow him. Satan then exults at the approaching temptation. The tree proves to be the tree of the forbidden fruit.



Lines 646–732 Eve recognises the tree to be the forbidden tree. She admits that she is tempted by the voice is a result of him eating the forbidden fruit, the fruit must be rejected to eat it. She states that it would be against God's command to eat it, as it mean death. She then immediately questions this command and asks Satan why he is eating the fruit. He claims he ate it and not only did he survive, but he gained a supernatural power. He uses innumerable rhetoric devices to argue that God is wrong and unjust in prohibiting Adam and Eve's consumption of the fruit. He deliberately keeps the couple ignorant so that they do not possess the knowledge and remain stupefied worshippers. He argues that this is a Tree of Life and not a sin, and therefore everybody should have the right to possess it.



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Lines 732–838 Satan's words seem to have persuaded Eve to eat the fruit. She is full of admiration. She considers Satan's words on knowledge and how to break God's commandment if it is only for the need of knowledge. God to forbid the right to be wise. She still does not detect deceit. 'farr from deceit or guile', and therefore it is not unwise to believe him.

She makes up her mind and eats the fruit, which intoxicates her. She thinks if it were a god. She then speaks of God as the 'great Forbidder' and the restraint in Paradise. She now feels a new nature in knowledge'.

Eve cannot decide what to tell Adam about her trespassing. She fears that if Adam will be 'wedded to another Eve', and as a result for the future, she decides that she has to tell Adam and make him

Lines 838–1000 Eve returns to see Adam making a garland of flowers for her. He is so long when he sees her returning with the forbidden fruit in her hand, saying she felt 'agonie of love' when she was away from him. She tells him of her encounter with the serpent and declares that she learned the fruit was for death. She says the fruit has blissful effects, but she can only feel it with Adam, the one whom she loves deeply. We learn from the text that Adam, with 'distemper', or sickness, a problem not previously known to him, is horrified at Eve's story and is left speechless by the gravity of her sin. Eve's trespass bitterly to himself, and then he regains his calmness. His cannot be changed. He is sure of God's punishment and their innocence. He states that losing Eve would be even more of a punishment to him than his. He follows her, even if it results in his death. Eve responds to Adam, 'I should freely eat the fruit, as she believes it is not death that awaits me, but 'new Joyes, new Hopes'. They then embrace; Adam takes the fruit but finally eats it 'overcome with Female Charm'. Afterwards, rain falls. Nature weeps at the committing of the original sin by Adam and Eve.

Lines 1010–1189 Adam and Eve now together experience their first 'carnal desire'. Adam is inexplicit about eating the fruit and that he is grateful to Eve for giving him the fruit. He admits he is 'enflamed' and full of lust for Eve. This is in what could be seen as a sinful sexual awakening. Eve gives him a kiss, and they disappear into the thicket to indulge in an 'amorous play'. The 'unkindly fumes' rise around them, they wake up suddenly from their dream to realise the full extent of their trespass. They feel their innocence is lost and it overwhelms them.

Adam is the first one to comment on their situation, saying they have lost the good and gained the evil, through the commands that they hide in the woods and look for something to eat. The parts as these now seem 'obnoxious' to the couple. Eve follows him with fig leaves to cover their shame. The narrator now tells us that the animalistic, base qualities. The narrator states Adam and Eve are peoples of the indigenous tribes discovered by Columbus. They have unfamiliar, feelings of 'high Passions, Anger, Hate, / Mistrust, Suspicion, peaceful and loving towards each other. They have a 'turbulent' relationship. Adam is the one to blame for the 'ruin' and accuse each other and finally admits their fault.

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Section One: Serpentine Satan – Satan’s (Lines 1–191)

Book IX begins with a presentation of Satan that is emotive and **forlorn**. The Devil reflects on his punishment, making the themes of tragedy, sin, and conflict this section’s key themes. Milton uses a variety of **semantic fields** in his presentation of Satan – both emotive and vengeful, juxtaposing the two in a notional conflict. Satan experiences along with the other angels a physical conflict between the Devil and God. Milton contrasts emotive words such as ‘torment’, ‘dark’, ‘bleeding’ and ‘destroyed’ with words such as ‘malice’, ‘dilemma’, ‘wily’ and ‘revenge’ in order to emphasise the Devil’s two contrasting emotions regarding his punishment from God for attempting to overthrow his power.

Satan reflects on his fall from heaven, and makes a bid to take the Garden in his own hands.

Key Characters: Satan, the night mist.

Satan’s emotional and physical torment appears to manifest in the natural setting that surrounds him. Milton uses **pathetic fallacy** to convey the effect of the Devil on the Garden of Eden, as Satan appears shrouded in a night mist of darkness. Milton plays on the convention of darkness as being associated with sin, mystery, and evil. This is emphasised as the Devil’s ‘dark suggestions hide from sharpest sight’ (lines 90–91) in the mist that descends on Paradise. The Devil’s dark nature and intent to deceive mankind is embodied in Milton’s personification of the ‘low creeping’ mist that smothers the Garden of Eden. Milton manipulates the property of mist to deceive and conceal the true appearance of things, as Satan mimics this property of mist in his attempt to conceal his true identity in the form of the serpent. Like the ‘midnight vapour’ that ‘glide[s] about the Garden’, the spirit of Satan glides into the body of the serpent that appears like a ‘labyrinth’ (line 183) in the grass. Milton’s use of the metaphor of a **labyrinth** further emphasises Satan’s use of the body of the snake to deceive mankind.

Forlorn: Satan is alone and despairing.

Labyrinth: a complex structure or a situation that is difficult to understand or escape.

Pathetic fallacy: the attribution of human feelings to natural elements.

Semantic fields: groups of words that are related in meaning.

Activities

Discussion Points

1. Consider Milton’s presentation of Satan in the opening 200 lines of the poem. Do you think Milton is sympathetic towards the character of Satan? Or do you believe God’s punishment of him is justified?
2. Do you believe a serpent is the most effective animal to choose as a symbol of evil nature, and why? Do you believe another animal would have been more effective?
3. After reading this opening section of the poem, do you feel that the Fall of Man was inevitable? If so, how?



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Section Two: Our Introduction to Adam (Lines 192–392)

Milton juxtaposes his introduction to Satan in Book IX with his presentation of Adam and Eve in prayer. Satan and Man appear as binary oppositions, emphasised by Milton's use of pathetic fallacy. The Eden presented upon Satan's arrival is covered in darkness in Milton's misty night setting. In contrast, the scene in which Adam and Eve pray to God alternatively appears idyllic, illuminated by a 'sacred light' (line 192), perfumed with a 'morning incense' (line 194) and decorated with 'humid flowers' (line 193). Milton's sensual descriptions of the 'sweetest scents and airs' (line 200) that fill the Garden of Eden reflects the blissful and holy scene of Adam and Eve's prayers.

Milton's juxtaposition of two opposing presentations of Eden arguably fills the reader with a sense of foreboding, and appears to foreshadow the fate of Eden following Satan's interference.

Satan's presence already appears to be having an effect on mankind, even before his attempt to lure Adam and Eve into betraying God. Satan's presence causes a conflict between Adam and Eve, as Adam voices his concerns regarding Eve's ability to resist the strength of Satan's force. Adam draws on their marriage and union under God's holy communication of Eve's weakness, as Adam reminds Eve that 'where danger or dishonor lurks, safest and seemliest by me she sits and stays, who guards her, or with her the worst endures' (lines 267–269). Adam's depiction of his marriage with Eve adheres to traditional and conventional gender roles, as Eve is cast in a subordinate light, subordinate to her husband. However, while the reader may interpret Adam as a caring, selfless and protective husband, we also gain foreshadowing events to come. Adam stays true to his wife throughout Book 9; however, to exert power over his wife, Eve appears resistant, transgressive and defensive to Adam's behaviour illustrates her first defiance of Adam. This defiance is symbolised in her posture as 'from her husband's hand her hand soft she withdrew' (line 385–386). Milton appears to foreshadow future betrayal in a form of **dramatic irony**, as Eve breaks every promise she states in

Summary

We are here introduced to Adam and Eve in prayer to God. Eve discusses her concerns about Adam still have left to do, and therefore, suggests that the two of them should be done faster. Adam disapproves of her suggestion, warning from God about Satan's presence in the Garden. Eve is offended at the suggestion, but weak to resist the powers of Satan, she reassures her that it is simply his duty to protect Eve that makes him worry about their labour.

Key Characters: Adam and Eve

Discussion Points

Does the text refer to a situation that is unlikely to happen then?

Misogyny

Does the text present a superior view of men?

Feminism

Does the text present a view of women that is superior to men?

Activities

Discussion Points

1. Consider Adam and Eve's presentation in this section of the poem. With whom do you believe that Adam was trying to doubt Eve's strength?
2. Consider Milton's presentation of gender roles in this section, and in particular, the roles in marriage. Do you believe that the presentation is a **misogynistic**, or

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Section Three: Satan's Tempting of Eve (1)

Almost immediately from the start of this section, the reader is presented once again with a foreshadowing of the impending events of Eden, as the narrator warns *'thou never from that hour in Paradise found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose'* (lines 406–407).

Milton's depiction of Eve in this section is overtly feminine, as she is depicted as being intimately connected to the natural world around her. Milton uses the metaphor of a rose, as the flowers that surround Eve are personified as *'blushing round about her glowed'* (lines 426–427). Milton's use of the symbol of a rose connotes a form of feminine beauty, seen in his previous presentation of Eve in Section Two. However, Milton uses an **extended metaphor** of the flower in this section of Eve herself as a *'fairest unsupported flower'* (line 432). Milton's comparison of Eve emphasises her beauty, but also evokes a feminine form of fragility that is later exploited by Satan later in the poem.

Eve's vulnerability to Satan's influence is embodied in another metaphor in the section, that, following Satan's spying on Eve, she appears *'veiled in a cloud of fragrance'*. This is conventional in literature as being representative of femininity, while evoking a sense of mystery. Milton's use of the veil embodies not only Eve's femininity and alluring presentation, but also a kind of barrier from nature, in which the fragrance of the roses of Eden shields Eve from Satan. However, as with any veil, this shield appears weak and easily overcome, as Satan's temptation proves successful.

Satan's dialogue in this section appears remarkably persuasive, as he makes use of a highly persuasive discourse with Eve. Satan makes use of flattery in his dialogue, as he refers to Eve as a *'sovrain Mistress'* (line 542), and *'Goddess'* (line 547) of the Garden, while praising her (line 540). Satan's dialogue proves successful, as this section concludes with Eve's response, a consequent first real sign that the fate of mankind appears doomed.

Satan, in the beginning of his plan to tempt Eve, will leave open the opportunity for his plan. To his dismay, the solitary Eve finally approaches and approves of his plan.

Key Character

Activities

Discussion Points

1. Consider Milton's presentation of Eve in Section Three. Does Eve's presentation change from her presentation in the previous section, and why?
2. Consider Satan's use of empowering language in his discourse with Eve. Do you think this is a result of Adam's disempowering of Eve in the previous section, that Eve would have resisted otherwise?

Essay Question

Reread lines 404–438 of *Paradise Lost* Book 9 from 'O much deceived' to 'the happy pair'. Write an essay on the presentation of Eve in these lines.

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Section Four: The Tree of Knowledge (L)

In this section, we are presented with Satan's most persuasive discourse throughout Book IX. Milton uses a variety of persuasive techniques and rhetorical devices throughout Satan's dialogue in this section. Satan's disposition appears persuasive in two ways, both linguistically and physically. Satan's appearance and use of language act as persuasive devices in order to tempt Eve. Satan's serpentine form appears beautiful and alluring to Eve. Satan uses the metaphor of fire to convey his temptation to the Devil:

*'... His eyes, and joy
Brightens his crest; as when a wandering fire
...Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
Misleads the amazed night-wanderer from his way
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool;
There swallowed up and lost, from succor far.
So glistered the dire Snake, and into fraud
Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree
Of prohibition, root of all our woe'
(Lines 633-645)*

Milton's use of the symbol of fire connotes a hellish image, appropriate for his desire in conveying the beauty of the Devil's serpentine form with an emphasis on the danger. The Devil's serpentine form is also emphasised through Milton's use of the stylistic device of sibilance. The sound made by the gliding snake, and the characteristic hissing sound associated with it, is seen repetitively in the following lines:

*'... More pleased my sense
Than smell of sweet flowers, or the teats
Of ewes, or you...
To satisfy the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair apples...
So talked the spirited sly Snake'
(Lines 580-613)*

Milton intensifies the effect of his sensual language with the use of sibilance in this section, as Satan's power is stressed through both the fire imagery and this sensual, sibilant language. However, Satan's rhetoric appears at its most powerful at the climax of his dialogue, as he concludes his persuasive speech with imperative language, as he commands Eve to 'reach then, and freely taste' (Line 732) the forbidden fruit.

Satan tells Eve that he has gained from the Tree of Knowledge. Satan's argument in this section is aimed at eating the forbidden fruit.

Key Character

Sibilance
sound made by
one



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Discussion Points

1. Which do you believe is Satan's most persuasive technique throughout this passage? Support your answer.
2. Do you believe that Eve's obedience to Satan's command illustrates the power of mankind? Could it have been possible for Eve to resist Satan? Give evidence.

Activities

Section Five: The Forbidden Fruit (Lines 769–893)

This section is arguably the most important, or eventful, of the whole poem. Throughout this scene, we see a change in the character of Eve as a result of the intoxicating effects of the forbidden fruit. In this section, we see the first explicit union of the body and the mind. This union is bound to the physical pleasure, as Eve's eating of the forbidden fruit 'feels' *at once both body and mind*' (line 779). This union appears toxic and unnatural, as the physical effects of the forbidden fruit on Eve's body appear to be accompanied with negative emotions, such as envy and jealousy. For the first time, Eve considers being deceitful, as she deliberates *'shall I to him make known as yet my change, and give with me, or rather not, but keeps the odds of knowledge in my power without cope'* (lines 780–781). Eve eventually settles on the moral decision to tell Adam of her crime; however, this decision is motivated by jealousy and selfishness, as it is only the thought of Adam being *'wedded to another'* (line 782) that prompts her mind. This change in Eve is epitomised by Milton's repetition of the flower metaphor. In Section Three, as the flower appears a symbol of the innocence and beauty previously attributed to Eve before she ate the fruit:

*'Adam the while,
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest flowers a garland, to adorn
Her tresses...
Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal trespass done by Eve, amazed...
From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve,
Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed.'
(Lines 838–893)*

The fading of the roses in this passage signifies the end to the innocent beauty of Eve, which is a recurring theme throughout the poem's previous lines. The fact that the garland is now a symbol of the love Adam has for Eve, and how the natural beauty of that love has been lost.

Like the union of body and mind presented throughout this section, along with Milton's return to the union between mankind and nature in Adam and Eve's union, Milton returns to the union between mankind and nature in Section Two and Three of the poem, the union between Man and Eden is repeated. In Section Two, Milton uses the fallacy to report the Earth's reaction to Eve's disobedience: *'Earth felt the wound, and sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe, that all was lost'* (lines 782–784). Here, Milton also displays the poet's tendency to foreshadow future events, as the reader can see the naturalistic display that the idyllic Eden previously presented has been lost forever.

Following Satan's temptation, Eve succumbs to the forbidden fruit. While she is under the effect of the fruit, Satan slithers into the garden.

Key Character

Activities

Discussion Points

1. Compare the presentation of Eve in this section to her previous presentation. Do you feel more sympathetic towards her, and why?
2. In this section, do you have any sympathy for the character of Adam or the character of Satan?
3. Consider Satan's influence in this section. Have you lost any of the previous sympathy towards him as a result of his evil deeds presented here? If so, why?

Essay Question

Reread lines 816–852 of *Paradise Lost* Book 9 from 'But to Adam what sort' to 'And how'. Analyse Milton's presentation of marriage and/or gender in these lines.

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Section Six: Eve's Tempting of Adam (Li

Following the establishment of a union between the mind and body, and man and nature, in the previous section, Milton continues his presentation of similar relationships throughout this second-to-final section of the poem. However, unlike in the previous sections, Milton intertwines the relationship between mankind and nature with Adam and Eve's marital relationship, in the following speech from Adam:

*'The bond of Nature draws us to us; own;
My own in thee, for thou art mine;
Our union cannot be severed; we are one,
One person, though we were to lose myself'
(Lines 956–959)*

Adam discusses here how his relationship with nature acts as a bond to his relationship with Eve. The Garden of Eden, and, therefore, his vow to God, prevents Eve from being alone in her torment. The body of Adam appears connected with the body of Eve, 'flesh' (lines 958–959) recalls the creation myth in which Eve was created from the rib of Adam. The union between Adam and Eve, and their state of oneness, is emphasised to the reader through the use of **parallelism** as Milton repeats the word 'one' in several similarly constructed sentences.

*'And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
One heart, one soul in both...
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime'
(Lines 966–971)*

The inclusion of **parallelism** in the above section from Eve's dialogue to Adam appears through which Eve emphasises the union between her and her husband share, in a bid to tempt him to eat the forbidden fruit. While Eve's dialogue is highly emotive, Adam's alternative appears more rational. He uses exclamatives in Adam's speech to translate Adam's hysterical state:

*'How am I lost! how on a sudden lost,
Defaced, deflowered, and now to death devote!'
(Lines 899–901)*

Parallelism is used in the above section to emphasise the union between Adam and Eve.

Milton's combination of exclamative and repetitive language throughout this section results in an intense exchange of dialogue between the two characters. The use of sexual and sensual language in his translation of Adam and Eve's lustful desire for the forbidden fruit. Milton's semantic field of desire includes words such as *breed, lust, wantonly, lust, dalliance, pleasure, and ardour* (lines 1010–1032). However, Milton links Eve's lust for one another is intrinsically linked with use of hellish imagery, as Milton uses 'inflame', along with 'burn'. Milton's combination of sexual lexis and imagery results in a powerful representation of Adam and Eve's desire with sin: the final stage of their punishment from God.

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Discussion Points

1. Consider Eve's decision to tempt Adam to eat the forbidden fruit, and his response. What does this tell you about their love for one another? What do you think Milton's gender roles are in this relationship and/or marriage?
2. Do you consider Adam's decision to be a selfless one, or a foolish one, and why?

Essay Question

Reread lines 896–916 of *Paradise Lost* Book 9 from 'O fairest of Creation' to '...presentation of love in these lines.

Section Seven: The Shame of Adam and Eve's Nakedness (Lines 1046–1126)

In this final section of Book 9, we see the events concluded. Adam and Eve appear, for the first time in the book, vulnerable and exposed, as they are tainted by the sin they have committed. The pair appear ‘opened’, ‘darkened’, and ‘shadowed’ (lines 1053–1055) by their shame. For the first time, Adam and Eve are negatively defined by their nakedness, as opposed to being liberated by ‘*at first naked glory*’ (line 1115). Milton elevates this presentation by creating a **semantic field** of vulnerability, containing words such as ‘*uncovered*’, ‘*destitute*’ and ‘*bare*’ (lines 1059–1062).

After the initial fruit wears off, their sleep at last is tainted by the shame of the covering of loins. The poem shows what they have lost.

Key Character

Milton’s establishment of a relationship between mankind and nature reappears as Adam and Eve’s emotive response to their new state of shame is conveyed by nature, in references to the weather in the Garden of Eden:

*‘They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
Rained at their eyes, but high winds worse within
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
Mistrust, suspicion, discord; and shook sore
Their inward state of mind, calm region once
And full of peace, now tossed and turbulent’
(Lines 1121–1126)*



Milton’s use of the words ‘*rained*’, ‘*winds*’ and ‘*tossed*’ arguably suggests that the natural landscape of Eden, and in particular the cause of the turbulent state in the Garden, is a result of the Fall. The tears of the pair are here likened to rain, while their sighs are likened to high winds. This imagery appears to parallel the use of pathetic fallacy in Sections Five and Six to share the emotional state of the characters with the reader.

Activities

Discussion Points

1. Consider the following line from Adam to Eve in Book 9’s final section: ‘*what I have admonished thee, foretold the danger*’ (lines 1170–1172). Compare this line to the end of Book 9, ‘*Thus they in mutual accusation spent the fruitless hours*’ (lines 1189–1190). Do you believe the narrator assigns blame for Man’s Fall? Do you agree with this? Give reasons for your answer.
2. Do you believe that without the interference of Satan, mankind was doomed to sin, or do you believe that without Satan, mankind would have achieved the ‘*joyed immortal bliss*’ (line 1166) set out for it?

Essay Question

Reread lines 1099–1189 of *Paradise Lost* Book 9 from ‘So counselled he’ to ‘... and thus they in mutual accusation spent the fruitless hours’. Do you believe the ending of Book 9 provides its reader with a positive or negative perspective on the Fall?

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The Author/Narrator Difficulties – Who R

*I now must change
Those Notes to Tragic. (p. 182, ll. 5–6)*

There is a complex and many layered narration that we can identify in *Paradise Lost*. A short introduction before the main body of the poem (e.g. 1.5), is narrated by an omniscient narrator.

In the main body of the text we are presented with a first person narrator, who also reports the characters' proceedings (e.g. 2.1 'so spake domestick Adam'). The narrator's introduction in Book 1, using elaborate references to the Greek mythology and the Bible. After Satan's fall, the narrator's words become scarce and they intertwine with the characters' speeches in the form of comments on who is speaking and in what tone ('Adam fervent'). Therefore, the role of the narrator is then reduced to structuring the characters' narrative. The tone and timing of particular speeches within the text reminds the reader of stage directions in which *Paradise Lost* expresses its dramatic, theatrical qualities. We can sense that if removed and replaced by stage directions, the text could work as a play.

Another layer of the narrative is also important to note. The use of elaborate soliloquies gives the characters a degree of narrative authority within the text. This is because they express their feelings and proceedings in a first person, subjective narrative.

A first person narrator is not a reliable one, as they are not omniscient and tend to be subjective. However, this causes many further issues with our narrator. If our narrator is not all-knowing, how can they narrate biblical events with the focus on emotional depth and insights into Adam's thoughts? This would be possible for an omniscient, third person narrator, however, Book 9 explicitly refers to himself (or herself, for we can never be sure of their gender). This, in turn, enables the narrator's objectivity. Every reader has their own set of opinions. To approach the text with and a first person narrator most certainly has one, too.

The narrator introduces the reader into the narrative by using the 'we' personal pronoun, which suggests equality to the reader.

*So glister'd the dire Snake, and into fraud
Led Eve our credulous Mother, to the Tree
Of prohibition, root of all our woe. (p. 198, ll. 643–645)*

This technique is slightly rhetoric in a way that it helps to form a bond between the narrator and the reader. If they are both of equal moral standing, they both share the same guilt and shame of the fall.

One more thing is worth noting when analysing *Paradise Lost*'s narration. It is an interesting question whether it could be Milton's voice speaking behind the narrator's voice.

We get a clear sense of the author speaking in the opening of Book 9 as the narrator-director, informs the reader – 'I now must change / Those Notes to Tragic'. There is a clear shift in the script by the author, who now comments on the plot himself. In the opening of Book 9, the narrator states that he is 'Nor skilld nor studious' in 'The skill of Artifice' (p. 183, ll. 35–45), by which he suggests that his work is not at all art, but a simple revelation, inspired by the divine forces. It is not Milton who speaks behind the narrator – as Milton, at the time of writing, was a poet and writer, and therefore he was indeed 'studious' in 'the skill of Artifice'. The narrator's lack of literary and literary knowledge, with the elaborate references to the classical and biblical texts, suggests his lack of knowledge.

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However, a possibility still exists that Milton does indeed speak behind parts of his text. This could be the narrator's racist remark about the Native American people in the context of the discovery of the Americas:

... Oh how unlike
To that first naked Glorie. Such of late
Columbus found th' American so girt
With feathered Cincture, naked else and wilde. (p. 210. ll. 1114–1117)

In this passage, the narrator compares the newly discovered Native Americans to the Native Americans of the European empires. Comparing all the characteristics of Adam (beastliness, uncleanness, etc.) to the Native American peoples is obviously racist and problematic, and is an echo of Milton's own views on the Native Americans.

What is more, the narrator's views are certainly behind parts of *Paradise Lost* Book 9 in which the narrator discusses the Native Americans. We will discuss this in the next chapter.

Activities

Text Transformation

1. Choose a short passage of Adam and Eve's or Eve and Satan's dialogue that you like. In small groups, each working with a different passage, transform the text you have chosen into a play. Is it hard or rather easy to perform?

Discussion Points

1. What is the significance of the narrator? Is his or her voice more or less important than the characters'?
2. To what extent is the narrator in this text unreliable? Who is he?
3. Can narratives ever be reliable? Why? Why not?
4. Do you think the narrator of this text is influenced by its author's, John Milton's, views on the Native Americans? Give examples to support your points.

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Characters – An Analysis

Adam and Eve – Love, Marriage and the Power Dynamic

Adam is the first and only man in the text. What is more, as the first part of Book 9 suggests, 'Growth, Sense, Reason' have 'all summ'd up in Man'. From the outset, therefore, there is an emphasis on the male and the masculine in the text. Adam was created by God first, Eve followed as a male's mate. Adam, created out of one of his ribs.

Adam – the Protector and Loving Husband

Adam tries to protect Eve from the temptation God warned the couple about. This is why he embarks on persuading Eve not to leave his side when she reveals this transgressive wish:

*... leave not the faithful side
That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects.
The Wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
safest and seemliest by her husband staies,
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.*
(p. 189, ll. 265–269)

The above passage gives us evidence of Adam's protective attitude towards Eve and of his ideas of the husband ethos. We can see that Adam considers 'guarding' Eve as his responsibility and she is 'safest' when she stays near him.

Therefore, Adam believes in traditional gender roles and the gendered distribution assign'd' (p.188, l. 231). What is more, he associates Eve for taking on the domestic lovelier can be found / In Women, that do studie household good, / And good work (p. 188, ll. 233–235). Adam drinks.

Adam is a loving husband. The narrator tells us that Adam provides Eve with 'mild words' in 'his care and matrimonial love' (p. 190, ll. 318–319).

He also recognises and admires Eve's celestial qualities and origin. He addresses Eve as 'the second Man', and therefore puts an emphasis on Eve's coming second after himself. Still, in terms of her human superiority over God's other creatures – 'immortal Eve, for so I call thee entire' (p. 189, ll. 291–292) Adam says, by which we understand him to mean 'entire'.

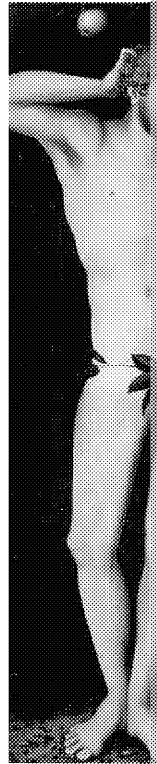
Eve – the Independent and Austere Wife

When we meet Eve, she seems very different to Adam in her values. She speaks to him of her wish to separate and carry on gardening in different areas of the Garden of Eden to provide some new enjoyment and amusement for the couple. When she meets him, he warns her about the temptation 'intended by [Adam and Eve's] Foe', Eve seems to react to his independence:

*... Eve /
As one who loves, and soon a running stream meets,
With sweet austere discourse thus reply'd. (p. 189, ll. 270–272)*

Eve is 'austere' in this passage, quite unlike the 'mild' Adam. It seems that Milton has no doubt about Eve's celestial qualities even before Eve is tempted by Satan. It is this that foreshadows the fall of the couple, and therefore of humankind, that is to come. We can see that it is Eve's potentially destructive influence and Adam's submitting to it that leads to the fall.

Indeed, Adam's submissiveness is key to understanding the peculiar power dynamic in the scene prior to Eve's departure.



Adam and Eve

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Tasting the Forbidden Fruit

After Eve's encounter with the serpent and her committing of the original sin, the breakdown of Adam and Eve's relationship and, by the end of Book 9, each blame the greatest of sins.

Shortly after tasting the forbidden tree's fruit, Eve experiences the first feelings of 'wedded to another Eve' and sees this vision as 'a death to [her] self' (p. 203, ll. 828–830). She considers the possibility of withholding or revealing the truth about her transgression to Adam, but chooses her own inferiority to him. She sees it not as a loss of freedom and right, but as something improving her freedom, as we can see in the next passage.

*... So to add what I could
In Fear, he more to draw his Love,
And make me more equal, and perhaps,
A thing not undesirable, sometime
Superior; for inferior who is free? (p. 203, ll. 821–825)*

Another effect of the couple's eating of the forbidden fruit is their erotic awakening. Adam experiences 'carnal desire enflaming' (p. 207, l. 1013) for the first time, as he 'begins to love' Eve. We are told by the narrator that Eve 'as wantonly repaid' and soon 'in Lust the end of their innocence in Paradise and the embracing of carnal pleasures, which shocked Milton's audience, especially the Puritan readers.

Thus, as one sin follows the other, Adam and Eve discover shame and seek to cover themselves with fig leaves, as they regard their nakedness as 'obnoxious and unseemliest'. In the end, Adam's last, lamenting word, just like Eve had before she ventured on her lonesome road, shows they stand quite equal, with Adam submitting to Eve's right to speak before he speaks for which she hoped after eating of the forbidden fruit, but it does not serve her and the shift are ruinous, and the couple.

*... in mutual accusation
the fruitless hour, when each of them self-condemning,
And each the other's guiltiest appear'd no end. (p. 212, ll. 1187–1189)*

'Humanised' Satan (in the Form of a Serpent)

Satan is the key character in Book 9. His appearance, as well as motives and thought processes, are described in great detail. First-person insights into Satan's reasoning help to provide justification for his actions and render him a fuller, rounder character who is disturbingly sympathetic.

Through the introduction to Book 9 we learn that Satan has 'compassed the Earth' (p. 182) which suggests his omnipresence – a characteristic traditionally associated with God and the divine. This circumnavigation of the whole globe by Satan – 'thus the Orb he roam'd' – is unsettling especially when we learn about his 'dark suggestions' (pp. 184–185, ll. 85–100). We are told he possesses 'Diabolic power' and is therefore a clear villain. He chooses to enter the body of a serpent for the purpose of tempting Adam and Eve and so he is in a doubly deceitful. His coming to Earth is concealed by 'dark mists and vapours rising' – Satan comes 'in mist / Of midnight' (p. 186, l. 159). This image is not only obscuring and setting the scene, but it also seems to portray the character of Satan as one who is lost and uncertain.



The Serpent

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Satan's Soliloquy

During Satan's first speech, or rather his dramatic soliloquy, the reader is encouraged to see Satan as a troubled individual, who tries to justify his ways. Satan talks with painful admiration of the Earth and all of God's creation, including humans. We can see this during his first speech, as, just after he describes all the wonders of the Earth's natural beauty:

*... I in none of these
Find place or refuge; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel
Torment within me...
For onely in destroying I can see
My selfe repaid.* (p. 185, ll. 118–129)

This soliloquy shows the destructive power and disposition of Satan. It also shows the unexpected or surprising side to Satan's character – he is a lost soul, punished by God for his pleasures offered by the Earth, and he is only satisfied by acts of destruction, which he sees as the human, for whom God 'built / magnificent this world', and therefore he has 'hundreds of adorers' as he saw belonging to the God's army of angels to be 'servitude inglorious'. Satan has decided to commit this transgression of denying his submission to God. Now he suffers from being excluded from the joys and enjoyments of both Heaven and Earth. His sense of loss fuels the already mentioned envy and destructive desires. This 'pleasure to destroy' stands in opposition to the constructive pleasure to create, forming a clear binary opposition. Satan then sees that 'spite is best repaid' (p. 187, l. 178), he states.

Humanisation

This 'humanisation' of Satan by Milton is worth noting. We are able to listen to him and actually hear his spiteful and wronged voice. Another important point is that there are three selves in Book 9. First one, obviously, is the arch-villain Satan himself, the fallen angel who rebels against God and uses his infernal powers to destroy God's beautiful creations, humans. The second is the appearance of the serpent that Satan decides to employ in order to enter the Garden of Eden in disguise. After the mighty diabolical spirit and his animal's disguise, the third self of this humanised self, the Christian self, this self which seems to stand behind Satan in Book 9. This self is the Satan capable of an array of human emotions and feelings.

If we explore this model further, we will see an interesting parallel with the Christian Trinity. God means a God who is one divine being consisting of three others – God himself, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. We can see here that the Christian triune God consists of the celestial spirit, the humanised God (Jesus), as well as the Holy Spirit which is often represented using the dove. These resemble the three ways in which Satan is represented in Book 9.

It is understandable, therefore, that many of Milton's early critics were disturbed by these attempts at rendering Satan more human and sympathetic. They were not accepted by the audience, who looked for clear and unambiguous praising of good and condemning of evil.

God?

God is not physically present in Book 9 – instead, he seems transcendent. Adam and Eve's deeds are carefully observed and noted by his omniscient figure. Everything in Paradise is under the figure of God and his commandments, but most importantly the humble life of Adam and Eve is introduced to us or even described.

God the Maker and the Almighty

God is referred to as the 'Maker' and 'the Almighty' throughout Book 9. To Adam and Eve, he and Eve refer to God with respect and devotion. They plan their days according to his commandments, diligently take care of the plants in the Garden of Eden, labouring in the morning and resting in the evening.

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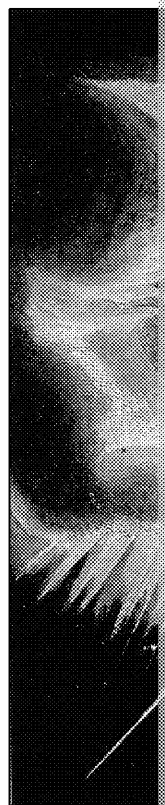


Losing Faith in God

Before Eve is tempted to eat of the forbidden Tree of Knowledge, she is drawn to Satan's words as he calls her 'a Goddess among Gods' (p. 196, l. 547). Thus, Satan explicitly undermines God's authority and status in Paradise. Eve, on the other hand, is visibly attracted to the idea of her divine self as she inevitably falls for Satan's rhetoric and does not resist temptation.

In continuation of Satan's anti-God rhetoric, shortly after Eve's eating of the forbidden fruit, there is a change in her own attitude towards God. We can see this in her idea of godliness and the divine loses its focus and becomes elusive. Eve begins with admiring 'Some virtuous, precious of all Trees' of which she has eaten as if it was a deity. Then she moves on to realising she has grown 'mature / In knowledge' just like 'the Gods who all things know' (p. 202, ll. 800–810). Here we can see that Eve not only sees herself as almost a deity, but that she also refers to plural, many 'Gods'. This symbolises her possible return to polytheism (a belief in many gods, such as this of ancient Greeks or Romans), and therefore a withdrawal from the Christian tradition. This removes God the Maker from the position of authority.

Eve then states that God is not a loving Lord and carer, but rather 'our great Forbidder' (p. 202, l. 815) who does not cease to watch the couple with the help of 'all his Spies', by which Eve means the angels. She has, therefore, lost her faith not in God's existence, but in his authority. By means of her words, God is then somewhat compared to Satan, with his guile and



Ancient

This passage is particularly useful in illustrating the elusive, uncertain character of God as presented with by the end of the book is the questioning of the God figure – what authority does he or she have over humans? In God's absence, Eve's musing on his superiority

Book 9 ends, however, with an image that fortifies the notion of God's power over humans. Adam and Eve suffer from the results of going against God's commandment and they are evidently experience shame and guilt for the first time in human history, and their relationship becomes endlessly and fruitfully, full of the infernal spite (an emotion previously associated

What is more, God is soon to exert his power even more obviously, by expelling Adam and Eve from Paradise forever.

Activities

Discussion Points

1. What effects does Milton's language have on the representation of characters?
2. Who is a sympathetic character and who is not?
3. Are there any likeable or positive characters in the text?
4. Why could the representation of God be problematic?
5. What is the significance of God's physical absence in Book 9?

Essay Question

1. Discuss the ways in which characters are portrayed in *Paradise Lost* Book 9. You should analyse the language produced by language and make reference to any contextual issues you may

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Adam and Eve

'So spake domestick Adam in his care' (p. 190, l. 318), the narrator informs us after speeches addressed to Eve. It is very interesting that Adam is 'domestic' here, a quality traditionally associated with women. We can see, therefore, the role-reversal phenomenon taking place. Eve's sphere (care, domesticity, docility) is embraced by Adam in the figure of a husband. Traditionally masculine traits (austerity, independence, mobility) can be found in Eve. Some interesting points can be made about the passage, in which Adam gives his consent. Here is the key extract:

Go in sweet innocence, relie
On what thou hast of vertue, summon all,
For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine.
So spake the Patriarch of Mankinde, but Eve
Persisted, yet submiss, though last, repli'd. (p. 192, ll. 372–377)

Once again, Adam is referred to as 'the Patriarch of Mankinde', which is a highly elevated title. It implies Adam's authority and leadership. Despite Eve's masculine traits visible in Book 9, she now has enough authority to decide whether to give permission for Eve's lonesome journey. Eve, on her hand, is suddenly 'submiss' and finds it difficult to take up the opportunity that has been offered – she 'persisted' at first. Afterwards, Eve has the last word in the conversation, but on Adam's husband's side. This can be seen as clear submission, as Eve refrains from speaking further once the 'Patriarch of Mankinde' has finished his statement. It can also, however, be seen as a sign of her own strength. This is because she allows herself to have the fateful last word in this crucial exchange, putting her own arguments up. As a result, she is the one to make the final decision on her departure. 'Soft she withdrew' (p. 192, ll. 385–386) the narrator explains, with the implication that it was Eve who separated from Adam. This is also symbolically signified by the withdrawal of her hand.

Satan and Eve

The relationship between Satan and Eve is presented as one of the most influential and complex in the poem. Satan is presented as a superior to Eve. The pair also appear to be binary oppositions, as Eve appears as the epitome of femininity: good, pure and naïve. In contrast, Satan appears as the epitome of masculinity: evil in his masculine presentation as a beast within Eden. It could be argued that this is a device by which Milton reveals Eve's personality to the reader. For example, Satan's power over Eve is shown to be pliant, vulnerable, and gullible. The Tree of Knowledge and its fruit appear to be the centre of their relationship, as it is the contentious object at the centre of their relationship. The power Satan holds over Eve, and her inability to resist his persuasive discourse, is shown when she 'then, and freely taste' (line 732) the forbidden fruit. Satan's power over Eve is also shown in her relationship with Adam, as Eve encourages Adam to also taste the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. As a result, it could be argued that Satan is more of a 'fluid' term, as he becomes Adam's 'Satan' as she tempts Adam to eat the fruit in a similar manner to her. Just like Satan cared little for the effect his plan would have on Eve, Eve's encouragement of Adam to eat the fruit appears a selfish bid to not become the first in sin.

Milton's presentation of Satan and Eve's relationship arguably commands the reader to question the agency throughout his narrative. Is Eve, or Satan, to blame for the Fall of Man? And what questions that Milton's presentation of Satan and Eve's partnership asks of the reader?

Activities

Discussion Points

1. Why do you believe Milton reverses the traditional gender roles in his presentation of Adam and Eve?
2. Although they never directly meet in Book 9, do you believe that Satan and Eve have a relationship? What kind of relationship do they have, and how do you think this contributes to the poem?

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The Pastoral

The pastoral is a literary genre, although some critics see it as a mode of literature which can be present in other literary genres. It is primarily concerned with images of an idealised countryside and work. It often involves figures of shepherds, farmers and cultivators, and tells stories of their humbly happy lives. It is also concerned with the purifying and soothing effects of physical labour.

Although the pastoral is normally a classical theme, and, therefore, a part of pagan tradition, it could be associated with the Christian ideals of purity and innocence. This is because it depicts people living in harmony with the natural world, and achieving simple satisfaction through their day-to-day work. The pastoral protagonists are normally self-sufficient as they can grow their own food and are portrayed as morally elevated because of their diligent and harmonious lifestyles.

This is how Adam and Eve are introduced to us when we first meet them in *Paradise Lost* Book 9. Their innocence and piety is reflected in the amount of gardening work that they do. The labours that they obediently undertake place them closer to God. They are peaceful, mild and loving; they live in union with nature.

In this way, Milton introduces a religious twist to the traditionally pagan (classical) employs the pastoral as part of the religious discourse. The poem often works by oppositions, and in the beginning of Book 9 we can anticipate that the bringing of Christianity is going to cause a shift in the pastoral.

What we often find at certain points of the book, however, is a rather wild pastoral introduced in this book, the Garden of Eden resembles more of an unruly jungle with vegetation. As I have discussed in the Lexis chapter above, the imagery surrounding darkness, mist and dankness. Instead of a carefully kept, soft lawn or grass there is an image of uncontrollable rankness and degeneration prevails. Harmonious growth is not identifiable in the 'midnight vapor' of Eden.

What is more, when Eve speaks for the first time in Book 9, her reasons for separating from Adam – the garden grows wild regardless of the amount of work they put into keeping it.

*Adam, well may we labour still to dress
This Garden, still to tend Plant, Herb and Flour,
... but till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
Luxurious by restraint; what we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton wind
Tending to wilde. (IX l. 25-31.)*

This statement can be seen as Eve's manifestation of her lack of interest in the pastoral. She does not regard the gardening labour as a way of living in Paradise. If so, then Eve is disobeying God's orders, even before committing the original sin – it was God who appointed Adam and Eve to tend the garden. Eve opposes this enforced pastoral lifestyle.



Pastoral

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Eve's observation is also a foreshadowing of the Fall with her early sign of disobedience. A darker force seems to be lurking in the thicket, disabling Adam and Eve from enjoying Paradise. This poses a threat to Adam and Eve's pastoral happiness, as nature here does not cooperate with the human.

As we can see, the result of Milton's combining the pagan with the Christian is a clash between the pastoral and the Puritan religious – neither of the ideals is supported by the ending. The apparent theme, but it is challenged by Milton's Christian humanist approach.

The First Romance?

Paradise Lost has the potential to be seen as a prototype of a romance. Two of its most important characters are a married couple and the text emphasises their interactions and emotions.



The First Kiss of Adam and Eve

The romance as a literary genre concerned with romantic love did not appear in English literature until the eighteenth century (with novels such as Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*). In Milton's poem, however, we can see an example of a typically romantic theme. When Adam is told by Eve that she committed the forbidden act, he is 'astonied' and horrified by what he hears. Although he is aware of Eve's approaching ruin and the gravity of the offence she committed, he does not abandon Eve in favour of cultivating God's precepts. He is too devoted to her, too attached to her, too in love with her too dearly to remain in Paradise when she is expelled and punished – this kind of devotion is innovative in Milton's times. Adam then says:

*How can I live without thee, how forgoe
Thy sweet Converse and Love so dearly join'd,
To live again in these wild woods and desert
Should God create for me another Eve,
Another like thee, who my life, my soul,
Would from my heart; no no, I feel
The Link of Nature draw me: Flesh of Flesh,
Bone of my Bone thou art, and from thy State
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe. (ll. 908–916)*

Adam's use of emotive language ('heart', 'loss', 'love'), his rhetorical questions and narrative forceful – it could be easily compared to a dramatic monologue. This then also introduces a degree of melodrama to the passage. We can see that Adam's decision is based on the fact that he will have to abandon Eve if he remains obedient to God.

Adam's trespass, we understand, is not a result of his submitting to temptation or lack of knowledge. Adam faces a difficult choice between the woman he loves and God, the figure who gave him life. He chooses to sacrifice his innocence and sin together with Eve. His choice, 'bliss or woe', which is what is expected of a husband. His last line reminds us of the vows which dictate the spouse's loyalty regardless of circumstances.

By this heroic deed, Adam ensures he will remain with Eve in this time of guilt and punishment. The plot line of Book 9 appears to move more in common with the lovers' discourse in a romance than the Puritan, religious discourse.

Activities

Discussion Points

1. Why do you believe that Milton uses the pagan tradition of The Pastoral genre in *Paradise Lost*?
2. To what extent do you believe the poem is actually a Romance tale? Does the poem's adherence to Romance?

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Key Themes and Ideas

Worship

Another important theme of Book 9 is the theme of religious worship. It is present throughout the book and it shifts its meaning slightly at each of the book's stages. We are first introduced to this theme when we see Adam and Eve leading a humble life, labouring in the Garden of Eden and following God's commandments. They live with an awareness of God watching them and therefore they shape all their actions in a way that is in accordance with his precepts. They are worshipping him according to the Christian ideals of worship – by being obedient to him, loving each other and working hard for their daily bread.

Things change when Satan infiltrates the Garden of Eden in order to avenge his own being punished by God. He encourages the humans' fall by tempting Eve to breach God's law. Satan, who is now present in the form of a serpent, does so by convincing Eve of his false worship of her. He addresses her as 'Queen of this Universe' or 'Goddess humane' to put Eve off her guard and render her less resistant to temptation. False worship is therefore a forceful tool used by Satan to induce Eve to sin.

Afterwards, when Eve tastes the forbidden fruit, she starts praising the Tree of Knowledge as 'precious of all Trees In Paradise' and its fruit the 'Fruit Divine'. There is a sense of a god, a deity. This image of Eve worshipping the forbidden tree could be a suggestion of downfall. This is because she can be seen rejecting her Christian beliefs. Animism is based on the assumption that not only humans have a soul. Animism declares that plant beings worthy of worship. This, in Milton's times, would be seen as tribal and therefore portrayed as false. The poem celebrates indigenous religion rather than worshipping a deity.

Lastly, when Adam eats the fruit offered to him by Eve and the couple experience a change, they seem to abandon religious worship altogether. Soon after realising the gravity of their sin, they seek to cover themselves up as they are now ashamed at their nakedness. Then there is a string of accusations. There is no room for any religious worship at the end of Book 9 and a suggestion of Adam and Eve's downfall – they have irreversibly lost their innocence.

Transgressive Femininity

Paradise Lost Book 9 is certainly concerned with this concept of the transgressive nature of women, social barriers and rigid norms of behaviour.

As mentioned before, there is a pre-expectation of Eve's transgression present in the beginning of the book, she is portrayed as predestined to sin. We can identify this from the first time she tells Adam about her wish to depart and work alone. As a separate part of the persuasion against Eve's venture, it is Eve's desire to have a stronger influence on Adam as Adam is often 'mild' and 'domestic'. Eve, on the other hand, is the active and somewhat independent amusement.

As I have discussed already in The Pastoral section, Eve displays her reluctance to follow Adam's lead on them by herself. She seems tired of the amount of work they continually do and the unfruitfulness. She dislikes the fact that all their efforts are 'Tending to wilde' in 'Obedience' opposes their enforced gardening task and states that she would like something 'brought to little' (IX, l. 223) – in other words, she wishes for some enjoyment and not just work.



Praying

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She then also opposes Adam's persuasive attempts at making her stay by his side, withdrawing of her hand from his:

*Thus saying, from her Husbands hand her hand
Soft she withdrew (IX, ll. 185–186)*

This act of withdrawing her hand from Adam's grasp is highly symbolic. It shows that Eve is a character strong enough to somewhat free herself from the patriarchal influence of her husband. This, in Milton's times, would be a significant transgression for a wife to commit.

Later on, when she cannot resist the serpent's temptation, she commits another transgression, this time against God's laws. On the surface level, this obviously has ruinous consequences on Adam and Eve's lives. When we look at it from a different angle in the Alternative Reading section, you will see that Eve's venture can actually be seen as having surprisingly positive consequences.

Temptation and Sin

Temptation and sin are perhaps the most apparent of the themes present in Book 9 as its whole plotline develops around the possibility and threat of temptation at first, then the temptation itself, and finally sin and its consequences.

There are, however, some more instances of temptation than the main one of Satan tempting Eve. In the beginning of the book we can see Eve tempting Adam to submit to her wish of separating. She uses rhetorical devices in her words to Adam and she successfully gains his permission for her departure. This permission, however, could be seen as Adam surrendering to Eve's temptation.

We can see further temptation resulting in Eve's sin when Satan succeeds in tempting Eve to the forbidden fruit. Afterwards, Eve turns to tempting Adam again and at last, she succeeds when Adam agrees to taste the fruit and thus breaks his main commandment. This is followed by the inevitable sin committed by Adam.

Separation

Another key idea that we can identify in Book 9 is the idea of separation, both physical and emotional. The first apparent instance of the theme of separation is the couple's physical parting in the beginning of the book, as Eve persuades Adam to go on an exciting adventure for both of them. Adam is very wary of this idea at first, remembering the danger in Eve leaving her husband's side. Eventually, Adam submits to Eve's temptation.

The next example of the theme of separation is Eve's spiritual separation from God when she eats of the forbidden fruit. We have seen already how she questions God's authority and is removed from the life she used to lead. She states that she is now in the divine position of a goddess. The fruit causes her to 'grow mature in knowledge', as the Gods who all together then seems to think of herself as of a godlike figure. She abandons her love for God and her separation from the Christian tradition.

As a result of her sin, Adam and Eve separate emotionally – their relationship, once so harmonious, turns to spiteful accusations and not much is left from their previous peace' (ll. 111–126) and marital love. This is followed by Adam and Eve's separation in the poem they are expelled from Paradise, and so the whole of humanity is forever driven from the Garden of Eden.

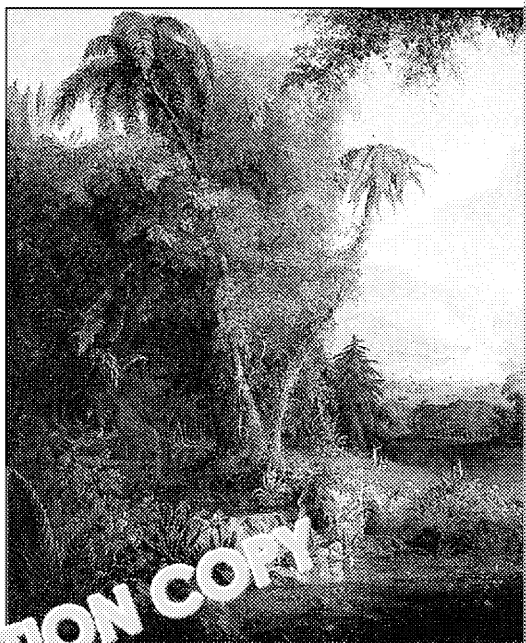
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The Sublime

The sublime is a concept present in literature and philosophy and it means a feeling of admiration and fear when in the presence of a force that is magnificent and mighty. It was popularised by the Romantics in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but it can still be identified in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. It is often the powers of nature (particularly landscape) or the supernatural that evoke the sublime feelings in its beholders. Examples of the sublime in literature include 'Mont Blanc', with its vivid description of the hostile, chaotic, overwhelming, and yet beautiful power of Mont Blanc. Another example could be William Blake's poem 'The Tyger' which describes a sublime power which is awe-inspiring, but incomprehensible and beyond understanding, evoking both positive and negative emotions, often causing fear in its beholders.

In Book 9 there are two instances of the sublime in the form of God and Satan's influence on Adam and Eve. Firstly, God is the great sublime power that affects Adam and Eve in Paradise. He is the spiritual force that produces a mixture of emotions in the first human couple. They admire and worship him as they see him as the superior force in their lives. His creations are awe-inspiring and wondrous. On the other hand, Adam and Eve fear the consequences of their own disobedience and are terrified at the thought of breaking God's laws. This results in a mixture of rapture and fear at the overwhelming power of God, and a certain hostility towards God. The sublime then affects Adam and Eve's behaviour as they love God for the incomprehensible greatness of his creation and fear his punishment at the same time.



The Garden of Eden, Thomas Cole

Satan's influence, particularly on Eve, also shows elements of the sublime. When he appears in disguise, he becomes the sublime wonder, puzzling Eve. She is 'not unamaz'd' and

*What may this mean? Language of Man pronounce't
By Tongue of Brute, and human sense exprest? (IX, ll. 543-544)*

We could say that the fact that Eve does not resist Satan's temptation is because of the sublime disguise. She recognises the incomprehensible spectacle of a serpent with human form and is drawn to it as it is a 'wonder' which 'claims attention due' (IX, l. 566). The serpent is unfamiliar but magnificent in its strangeness. This sublime appearance of the serpent leads to the deceitful lead.

Finally, the Tree of Knowledge is also a sublime force in the text. It is introduced to Adam as an object of awe, giving sense and deeper knowledge to

Eve seems to be awestruck by the tree's grandeur and supernatural characteristic:

*Great are thy Vertues, doubtless, best of Fruits.
Though kept from Man, and worthy to be admir'd,
Whose taste...
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
The Tongue not made for Speech to speak thy praise. (IX, ll. 745-749)*

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We can see how Eve seems to praise the forbidden tree because of its powers that

*O Sovran, vertuous, precious of all Trees
... henceforth my early care,
Not without Song, each Morning, and due praise
Shall tend thee. (IX, ll. 795-801)*

In the above passage, Eve spiritually elevates the tree and both in awe of it and in admiration around the tree is seen by Eve as almost godlike. Therefore, she worships the tree.

On the basis of the above examples, we can argue that Milton's sublime is negative in a sense of the sublime of the sublime and Eve and he therefore uses its effects to fortify (which is of course, contrary to our married couple). Satan succeeds in tempting Eve and, finally, presenting the Tree of Knowledge to her as a sublime power, worthy of her consideration.

Activities

Discussion Points

1. Consider Milton's presentation of Eve's femininity as transgressive. Do you believe her to be independent, or ignorant? Give reasons for your answer.
2. How does Milton's presentation of Eve compare to the 'savagery' suggested in Book 4?
3. Is there any point in Book 9 that you believe Milton presents Adam and Eve's relationship without the interference of Satan? You may want to think about the presentation of the Tree of Knowledge in your consideration.

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Blank Verse

As mentioned in the Structure and Form chapter, the poem is written in blank verse, which has no rhyme pattern.

Blank verse does not look or sound as structured and rhythmic as rhymed poetry, however, the effect on *Paradise Lost*'s reading experience is that blank verse slows the poem down, intensifying the text. It is deliberately designed to make the reading of the text harder and more laborious, reflecting the mood and meaning of the poem, which tells its readers a sombre tale of human tragedy.

The blank verse form also has a speech-like quality and it makes the poem's narrative more realistic. The run-on-line technique is also important in creating this effect. It involves interlocking lines that run on to the next line below. This, once again, aids the poem's realism and renders it more like natural speech.

Iambic Pentameter

Iambic pentameter is a metrical line or rhythm. It remains the most commonly used form of poetry in English because the iambic rhythm is the natural rhythm of the English language. An iamb is a foot consisting of two syllables, the first of which is unstressed and the second is stressed. In a sentence or line the first syllable is not stressed and the second is. Iambic pentameter consists of five iambic feet, which there are five unstressed syllables followed by five stressed ones.

The metrical line of the poem, therefore, makes its narrative and monologues sound more like natural English speech. This could be linked to Milton's intention to present his religious revelation rather than a crafted piece of literature.

Syntax

When we read *Paradise Lost* Book 9 we notice many lines of an unfamiliar, external syntax, which sound unnaturally and 'foreignly' English. This foreign feel of Milton's syntax is due to the fact that he first studied languages in Latin. Milton used Latin for writing most of his tracts and letters. Because of his outstanding Latin language expertise he was also appointed the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, specialising in Latin translations, by Oliver Cromwell's Government.

The foreign-sounding structure of the Miltonian language is therefore explained by his background in political work. This could be a deliberate effect – Milton wanted his epic poem to resemble the works of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Employing Latin (or Latin resembling) syntax in his poem being a replica, or perhaps a translation of an ancient poem.

This helps to elevate the poem's style, which was Milton's ambition – to make it like the works of the ancient Greeks and Romans. What is more, it slows down our reading and makes it more difficult. This is another effect of the blank verse as explained in the Blank Verse section.

Examples of the 'unnatural' syntax include:

*Adam consents not, alledging the danger, lest if he should yield, of whom they were
attempt her found alone.*
(IX, The Argument, p. 182)

or

*With this answer he then, and thus forewarn'd
Chiefe of our race, that thy own last reasoning words
Touch'd onely, that our trial, when least sought,
May finde us both perhaps farr less prepar'd,
The willinger I goe, nor much expect
A Foe so proud will first the weaker seek,
So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.* (IX, ll. 377–384)

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Binary Oppositions

Binary oppositions are present throughout Book 9 and they contribute to creating highlighting and contrasting the good and the evil.

The more obvious, general binaries which can be identified are God/Satan, sin/virtue, infernal/the divine. Also present is the important contrast of God's creating and Satan's destroying. These binary oppositions are needed for the poem to function – they create tension, organise the plot and dictate the audience's sympathy – lack of it. When the binary oppositions are challenged, for example when the virtuous Eve is tempted (ll. 455–466) it challenges the text itself and we begin to question the character and the overall morality of the narrative – when Satan challenges our assumptions of his character and of sin and virtue in the text.

If we analyse the text more closely, we will notice how the binary oppositions are used to create mood and meaning in the poem. In Satan's first soliloquy, he describes the Earth and that they are inaccessible to him (ll. 99–178). The binaries we can identify are pleasure/torment, productive/destructive, delight/woe and sweet/bitter. These oppositions are used to create mood and meaning in the poem. We can therefore see how the binary oppositions create mood and meaning in the poem.

The man/woman binary is an important one to bear in mind when we carry out a binary opposition introduces a differentiation based on the characters' gender. This highlights the difference between Adam and Eve but it could also suggest (by means of a binary opposition) that Eve is superior to the other. I will discuss Book 9's feminist interpretations further in the next section.

Binary oppositions are also used to highlight Eve's moral superiority to Satan, most notably in their encounter, in lines 455 to 466. We are presented with images of 'innocence', 'softness', 'Angelic' that concern the appearance of Eve. In contrast to these we can identify the 'Evil', 'fierceness', 'malice' and 'envy'. We can see how this short passage is used to create tension and suspense in anticipation of Satan and Eve's first interaction.

These oppositions are challenging because we know that Eve is going to commit the sin of disobedience to God. This therefore undermines the oppositions present in the text. Does this undermine the God/Satan and punishment/praise binaries? Does it question the good and what is evil?

This, in turn, could be linked to the political interpretation of Milton's text. It seems to be a statement on the Civil War, rather than a pro- or anti-revolution statement. Milton is not trying to show the royalist evil or vice versa. He is rather showing us the complexities and uncertainties of the war.

Lexis and Its Effect on the Imagery

It is important to look at individual words when analysing a poem. *Paradise Lost* is constructed and shaped by the sound and meaning of individual words which create the atmosphere. The example in Book 9 that I am going to have a look at is the latter part of the passage between lines 145 and 178. In this passage, meaning and mood are created by careful choice of lexis.

We are informed that Satan is gliding through 'the earth's' undergrowth in the 'midnight', 'obscure', 'dark' and 'foul'. These introduce a sense of uncertainty, mystery, unpleasantness into the text. Satan laments the fact that in order to enter Paradise, he has to become 'bestial slime'. Therefore, there is an abundance of forceful, negative lexis in this passage. Instead, we are presented with 'indignities' and bitter 'revolutions' or 'Drie' in the passage, which makes us picture the setting as mouldy, damp and diseased. This contributes to the opening of Book 9. These semantic fields of bestiality and decay and degeneration to the opening of Book 9. These semantic fields of bestiality and decay contribute to the grim, dark imagery of the passage. It also helps forming the image of Satan as a character, who finds his punishment 'obnoxious' and wants to 'spite' God and his kingdom. This highlights the injustice which he was met by. All this dark and ominous imagery foreshadows Eve's fall and descent into a life of sin later on in Book 9.

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An important thing to consider when analysing this paragraph is also the sound of lexis we get a clear sense of a furious tone of Satan's voice. However, there is more passage out loud. Have a look at the example below.

... Son of despite,
Whom us the more to spite his Maker rais'd
From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid. (ll. 176–178)

When we read it out loud, we notice that this fragment consists of many s sounds. This consonant in a text is called sibilance. Sibilance is a literary device used for various purposes and employed as a means of conveying the 'hissing with anger' sound. It is especially important as it not only aids the representation of Satan's fury. Satan disguises himself as a serpent, and interestingly, the sibilance also mimics the hissing of a snake. What is more, sibilance in this passage attempts to imitate the sound of the serpent's gliding through 'each Thicket Danck'.

Lexis or words used are therefore highly important in creating the appropriate atmosphere and complementing characters' thoughts and intentions.

Rhetoric

Rhetoric is widely used by the characters of *Paradise Lost* Book 9. It is used by Eve to work in different parts of the Garden. It is then used by Adam to prevent her from leaving successfully. Later, rhetoric is used by Satan to tempt Eve.

Rhetoric most commonly includes techniques such as:

- personal pronouns
- emotive words and use of imagery
- forceful phrases and repetition (including clusters of 's' and repeated words)
- rhetorical questions
- hyperbole, or exaggeration
- making positive points personal and negative points impersonal

Examples of rhetoric can be found in Adam and Eve's exchanges. A passage which occurs between lines 327–331. Eve uses many personal pronouns in this extract, such as 'I' and 'us'. She often repeats 'foul'. She employs emotive, forceful phrases combined with rhetorical questions like 'happie, still in fear of harm?' (l. 326) or 'What is Faith, Love... / without exterior help?' (l. 327). Repetition is noticeable when she repeats the forceful word 'foul' three times in an impersonal point about the uncertain 'Foe' whom they fear:

Onely our Foe
Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem
Of our integritie: his foul esteeme
Sticks no dishonor on our Front, but turns
Foul on himself... (ll. 327–331)

Lastly, in her rhetoric way, Eve makes use of Adam's love and submission to God by saying:

Let us not then suspect our happie State
Left so imperfet by the Maker wise (ll. 327–328)

Adam uses a similar array of rhetorical devices to keep Eve by his side and dissuade her from solitary work. In the passage between the lines 291 and 317, he uses many personal pronouns and 'us'. He uses emotive statements such as 'immortal Eve, / For such thou art' (ll. 291–292). He uses emotive and forceful lexis to persuade Eve to stay, and he uses rhetorical questions, just as in the last line of the following paragraph:

I from the influence of thy looks receive
Access in every Vertue, in thy sight
More wise, more watchful, stronger... (ll. 309–311)

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Perhaps the most apparent instance of rhetoric in the poem is Satan's rhetoric with the forbidden fruit. The passage that I will be looking at takes place in the lines 679 to

Satan addresses Eve as the 'Queen of this Universe' (l. 684) and bestows apparent win her trust and fondness for him. Thus, he tries to appeal to Eve's vanity.

He also criticises the opposite opinion, which is another strong rhetorical device – Eve and Adam the privileges and pleasures of tasting the forbidden fruit. He makes commandments ('Why then was this forbidden? Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant presents his views as a more positive, more desirable and just alternative:

*Do not believe
Those threats of Death; ye shall not Die:
How should ye? By the Fruit? It gives you Life... (ll. 684–686)*

Satan thus makes himself more attractive and accessible. He puts himself in opposition to the 'Threatener', and offers Eve more positive and encouraging information. He tries to do this by questioning the possibility of her death – 'you shall not Die: How should ye?' he

The serpent also includes many rhetoric contrasts in his speech, using binary opposition to highlight the perceived injustice of God's restrictions. He, once again rhetorically, asks:

*Shall that be shut to Man, which to the Beast
Is open? (ll. 691–692)*

We can identify two strong, emotively charged oppositions in this single line – Man and Beast are designed to persuade Eve that to eat the fruit should not be forbidden and that death is not inevitable. This undermines God's reasonability and authority in Eve's eyes. This is the ultimate result of Eve's disobedience to the God's commandment, which occurs after she listens to the

Activities

Discussion Questions

1. What are the strengths of Satan's argument? How does he succeed in tempting Eve? What rhetorical devices does he employ and how are they effective?
2. How are lexis (words) used in the text to create specific effects?
3. Is Milton successful at creating the mood of his text? Why? Why not?

Essay Question

1. Using examples from the text, explain the effects of language on the mood of Book 9.

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Structure and Form of *Paradise Lost*

The Epic Poem

Paradise Lost is an epic poem. The aim of epic poetry is to proclaim and propagate values and characters, often concerned with issues of human nobility and morality. *Paradise Lost* point out the ideas of morality, sin and punishment, and, in the end, offers the reader a moral lesson. Drawing upon the Bible as well as classical literature, both of which are examined in detail, renders Milton's epic poem even loftier.

Milton was originally criticised for his choice of the epic form for his work. Although the genre at the time, his reviews were mixed, as not all of the critics found the epic form suitable. Milton was criticised for this. This lack of approval for the text's form originated from the poem not being an epic poem, does not present the audience with an epic hero. In fact, we have Satan, who seems to be the main protagonist of the poem. As epic style is traditionally associated with the grandeur of a nation, it is highly problematic that Milton chose not to include a symbol of grandeur in his narrative.

It was the later reviewers who appreciated the form and tone of *Paradise Lost* and that the elevated style of the poem put Milton in line with all the other great European writers like Shakespeare or Homer (Dyson, 1973, p. 13).

Structure

The poem is broken down into 12 books (10 books in the first edition, prior to 1674). Each book begins with 'The Argument', or a brief abstract which summarises the plot of the given book. This is a degree of theatricality, with 'The Argument' paragraphs preceding the reader of the main text. We sometimes see written around the main text in plays. Interestingly, John Milton initially intended *Paradise Lost* to be a play before settling on the idea of an epic poem form. Book 9 features another theatrical effect – which is intertwined with the narrator's brief comment on the action.

Blank Verse

The poem is written in blank verse – it has no rhyme pattern. It was a relatively new form, originating in the latter part of the sixteenth century. Many decades later it was not only used by poets such as Shelley or Wordsworth and remains the most popular form of poetry in English.

It is important to remember that, if a poem does not have a rhyme scheme, it does not mean it is not a poem. In *Paradise Lost* the lines appear irregular and varying in length; however, they are in iambic pentameter and therefore the poem maintains a rhythm.

To Milton himself, a rhyme pattern causes an author's 'constraint to express many thoughts'. In the 'Versification of *Paradise Lost*' from the 1668 edition, Milton stated the following about blank verse:

The measure is English... verse without rhyme, as that of Homer in Greek and Latin, rhyme being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse.
(Milton, 1668, in Dyson and Lovelock (eds), 1973, p. 3.)

We can, therefore, see that Milton's decision to use blank verse was to elevate the standards of the works by the great ancient Roman and Greek poets.

This form also aids Milton's representations of the biblical world through the use of blank verse. The uncertainty and obscurity of the biblical world is reflected in the poem. The destabilising effect of the lack of rhymes puts an emphasis on the content of the poem. It helps to draw the readers' attention to the issues of the divine and the human world.

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Activities

Discussion Points

1. Do you like the structure of this poem and why / why not?
2. What do you think is the significance of the blank verse in this poem? How does it sound?
3. Why do you think Milton wanted his text to resemble text written by ancient

Essay Question

1. Discuss the effects of form and structure on the meaning and feeling of *Paradise Lost*. You should also include an analysis of the language used.



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Contextual Analysis

Monarchy, the Civil War and the Restoration Society

John Milton's social context was a great influence on his creation of *Paradise Lost*. The biblical was a popular one. Writing about the punishment of sin and baseness and purity was especially well received by the Puritan readers. There is more to *Paradise Lost* than the depiction of good and evil and their consequence.

If we take Milton's radical political view into account, we will be able to uncover more work. Milton was a keen critic of the monarchy and supporter of the Cromwellian rule and republicanism. He was so much so that he introduced regicide in one of his works that regicide was a real change in Britain. Later, it was apparent that the newly established republic was not desired by British society and that a return to the monarchy was required; this too on Milton significantly. Milton wrote *Paradise Lost* after these events, as part of his critique of the Restoration. This is where we can draw a few comparisons between Milton's Restoration and the broader events in *Paradise Lost*.

Firstly, it is important to remember that in the seventeenth century a king was seen as a gift from God. Monarchy in general was regarded as a gift from God and the king as God's emissary. The king's political power and elevated socio-economic status. It could, therefore, be said that *Paradise Lost* symbolises a privileged monarch of great power.

Adam and Eve's initial respect for their 'Lord' and 'Maker' turns into apprehension of God the 'great Forbidder'. This could symbolise the nation realising that the monarch was not an emissary in Britain, but rather a tyrant, keeping the nation under surveillance and threatening the people with severe consequences for any improper actions.

We can take this symbolism even further to try to uncover what the figure of Satan is a metaphor for. A troubled nation, destroyed by years of unfair monarchic rule, what process? Perhaps this nation now seeks to overthrow the monarch using radical, but

Finally, the notion of 'paradise lost' itself is rather telling – the paradise lost to people, the opportunity of forming a republic, also lost to society as the restoration of the monarchy. The promise of a new, fair, orderly country was, to Milton, a promise of a political paradise. These radical hopes had to be buried. *Paradise Lost* seems to be Milton's lament on

Paradise Lost Book 9 is, therefore, a clear reference to the Civil War and the Restoration. The complex question present of whether it is a critique of the Restoration or the revolution is a metaphor for losing the republican paradise to the returning monarchy. The ambiguity of the text, the inability to tell a positive figure from an unsympathetic figure, is an important issue. The text tells us who the 'bad' character is, and, therefore, we cannot be sure of whom the text is telling us more of a debate. Milton is debating what went wrong with the republican experiment. He tries to work out a series of these political issues through the figure of Satan. The text serves us an alternative picture of a powerful tyrant, of a privileged king and of a nation. It is a metaphor for the obscurity, uncertainty and inconsistency of the then political situation.

This intended inability to resolve the issues raised in *Paradise Lost* Book 9 is perfect. Catherine Belsey:

Paradise Lost... does not immediately resolve the problems... it raises, it rethinks, it reopens them in different terms, and tries again. (Belsey, 1988, p. 15)

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Censorship in Miltonian England

In the seventeenth century all books were subjected to government control and laid out by the professional censorship bodies. This order was put in place by the government when a book was published. Many books were considered improper if they contained blasphemous or obscene text. Even if text was independently published anyway, the publisher and author would face severe penalties. Authors and editors were generally displeased with the censorship laws.

In 1644, as a response to the most recent censorship laws of 1643, John Milton wrote the political tracts, *Areopagitica*. It is a tract written in response to the unethical nature of censorship. Many critics see it as one of the most important anti-censorship pieces of prose ever written. It presents freedom and censorship as opposites, and tries to justify why it is that free speech is more cultivated in England than in other countries.

In *Paradise Lost* Book 9 the forbidden tree is referred to as the 'Tree of Knowledge' or 'knowledge' which the free press and literature provide. Adam and Eve are forbidden from eating from it. Therefore, God represents the prohibiting authority (establishment) in the text and the English public of Miltonian times. When Satan tries to tempt Eve to breach God's command, he persuades her that, in reality, there is nothing wrong with possessing the forbidden knowledge. It is a privilege which should not be denied anyone, rather than sinful exploitation.

And wherein lies

Th' offence, that Man should thus attain to know? (ll. 725–726)

Satan dedicates most of his monologue to the issues of forbidden knowledge. He also argues that Adam and Eve are stupefied by the ban and unnecessarily kept ignorant. He tries to convince Eve that the knowledge withheld from her by the establishment (God). He successfully persuades Eve that she should eat from the tree.

*Why then was this forbid? Why but to awe,
Why but to keep ye low and ignorant,
His worshippers; he knows that in this state
Ye eat thereof, your Eyes are opened cleere,
Yet are but dim, shut up as in a mist;
Op'nd but to the light, ye shall be as Gods,
Knowing both Good and Evil as they know. (IX, ll. 703–709)*

We can see how Satan's words refer to the establishment's fear of losing their power. They are trying to keep control over the public views by censoring books and keeping the public in the dark. However, the new, perhaps more liberal, outlooks.

We can also suggest that Satan represents the radical, anti-censorship views, and that Milton's own political opinions.

The Growing Role of Women in Seventeenth-century England

The seventeenth century saw a significant improvement in women's contribution to society. Most importantly, women were increasingly involved in the newly formed Quaker movement. They were allowed to be active members of the Quaker community, but they could also be very socially empowering change for women in England. This encouraged many people to think about women. Politicians and thinkers were considering the possibility of allowing women to participate within the social structures. The possibility of women becoming involved socially was a popular issue at the time, with many people supporting the women's case.

This could be seen in Milton's portrayal of Eve, his only woman in Book 9, as a bold and adventurous character. She is not afraid to take bold steps and make her own decisions. It reflects the women's struggle for equality. One could say that Eve's transgressive behaviour was the prime cause of her and her husband's fall. However, Milton decides to depict the adventurous, independent Eve, rather than the unfortunate Eve. Milton does not state whether Eve's independence and courage were a good or bad thing. It is an opportunity for a new, exciting life. He leaves this moral evaluation of her character up to the reader. However, the issue of women becoming more and more emergent in society is a central theme of the poem.

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Milton's Views on Divorce

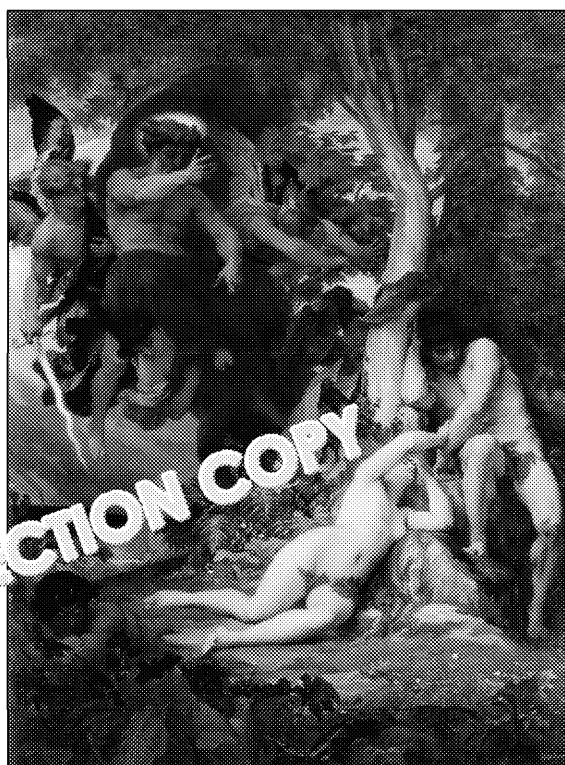
John Milton's first marriage was not successful. He was 35 years old when he married Anne Powell. Although she had later returned, Anne left Milton shortly after they got married. According to various biographers, Anne was not happy with her husband and refused to have children. This prompted Milton to produce a number of divorce tracts, which were pieces of prose in which he expressed his views on divorce. In his tracts, he declared divorce to be moral and positive, as well as a necessary response to certain circumstances. His own failed marriage inspired him to treat divorce almost as a duty, and a relationship to end.

This liberal view is present in *Paradise Lost* Book 9, in the representation of the biblical marital relationship. Eve is more venturesome, Adam is less so; Eve needs independence and Adam is more soberly independent. The ending of the book portrays them as an incompatible couple who cannot be happy in each other's company. After they have both sinned, they stay together and endure their punishment together. What seems to be the most punishing, however, is the fact that they are forced to stay together. Therefore, the ending of the book suggests that, should Adam and Eve have been allowed to divorce, they would avoid the endless stream of bitter accusations and anger. They stay together and endure their punishment even worse to endure.

Activities

Discussion Points

1. Consider the points made above regarding Milton's ambiguous presentation of marriage to political and monarchical figures of the time. Do you believe the character of Adam suggested? Is there one clear character that you see as 'good' or 'bad', and with whom you sympathise with? Give reasons for your answer, discussing your view with a partner and with the rest of the class.
2. Consider the presentation of Adam and Eve's marriage in light of the context of Milton's own unsuccessful experience of marriage. Do you believe that the close relationship between Adam and Eve's marriage in Book 9 is completely realistic, and eradicates any hope for the two? Give reasons for your answer.



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Paradise Lost and Feminism

Because *Paradise Lost* Book 9 features a married couple of a man and a woman, it is a good text for feminist readings of the text. Feminist readings are mostly concerned with the treatment of women within the text. When approaching the text in a feminist way, we can identify several issues.

One of the feminist issues of the text is Adam's possible misogyny. He does remind Eve at the beginning of Book 9, he tells her she is vulnerable and safest by his side, too. He is with Eve when she presumes with the forbidden fruit. This means that John Milton – he allows Eve the possibility to choose, rather than stating it was Eve who forced Adam, however, he could be seen as misogynist, especially when, towards the end of Book 9, he says:

*Thus it shall befall
Him who to worth in Women overtrusting
Lets her Will rule; restraint she will not brook,
And left to her self, if evil thence ensue,
Shee first his weak indulgence will accuse. (IX, ll. 1182–1186)*

Another issue concerns the fact that Eve is subjected to male surveillance through God watching over the couple, as when Eve tastes the forbidden fruit Nature sighs that God must have seen the trespass. Eve is also watched by Adam, most notably at the beginning of the book:

*Her long with ardent look his Eye pursu'd
Delighted. (IX, ll. 397–398)*

Satan in the form of a serpent is another male character who observes Eve. Moments before he seduces her, he says:

*Wonder not, sovran Mistress...
with disdain,
Displeas'd that I should at thee thus, and gaze
Insatiate. (IX, ll. 532–536)*

The concept of this male 'gaze' is very often used in feminist readings of texts. It is an empowering right for men to look at women and assess their appearance – the ability for a man to look at the woman, and the need for the woman to be looked at. The man is therefore more powerful in an interaction with the woman, who is barely there to be looked at. This is repeatedly being looked at by different male characters renders her social status.

This surveillance of Eve by all of the male characters in this book is closely linked to her behaviour and appearance. God, although not present, judges Eve's transgressive behaviour. Adam is at first delighted to watch Eve's celestial figure and admire her delicate beauty, but then he looks at her differently. While still assessing her, he now calls her 'ingrateful' (IX, l. 1164) and accuses her of being ungrateful.

These issues lead us to think that Eve is subjected to the patriarchal male gaze and condemnation she is subjected to after she sins, and that she is therefore an oppressed woman. However, we cannot forget that Eve is the active, 'bold' and 'adventurous' (IX, l. 921) character who challenges God's unjustified prohibition to introduce the effects of possessing the knowledge are difficult to cope with, but at least Adam and Eve are not restricted by the same rules. An alternative reading suggests. We can, therefore, see Eve as a woman, who is not just a victim of her desire for freedom and independence, or a bold woman who challenges God's authority.

Before you discuss this issue, I would like to share with you two important feminist readings of *Paradise Lost* Book 9 and our married couple of characters, Adam and Eve.

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Hélène Cixous' 'Sorties'

Hélène Cixous is an influential French feminist theorist. In her 1975 essay, 'Sorties', she argues that our thoughts are shaped by binary oppositions, such as 'Sun/Moon'. In these binaries, Cixous states, always assume that one is superior to the other. These binaries, Cixous argues, always assume that one is superior to the other. These binaries, Cixous argues, always assume that one is superior to the other. She argues that the 'Man' who is assigned superiority by society. Cixous concludes her essay with a call for each other and neither 'Man' nor 'Woman' is superior. She suggests the pairs of opposites, should work together to help each other and blur the boundaries of what is 'feminine' (Cixous, 1975, in Lodge and Wood (eds), 2008, pp. 359–364).

We can see how *Paradise Lost* Book 9 operates within these binary oppositions. The activity/passive binary is important, but there is the man/woman binary present. The problems experienced in Book 9 originate from the blurring of these oppositions, as discussed in the Oppositions section. The result of the man and woman's cooperation (their mutual cooperation) is arbitrary – we can argue this blurring of the boundary between man and woman led them to their fall (expulsion from Paradise) or helped them start a new, free life.

Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*

Woolf's famous novel, *A Room of One's Own*, is full of interesting feminist meaning. In this novel, Woolf criticises the fact that women do not have access to education or money. She discusses the importance of having time and space of one's own. She focuses on the importance of having time and space of one's own. She argues that a woman needs time, financial stability and, most importantly, a room of her own to create. (Woolf, 1929, in Lodge and Wood (eds), 2008, pp. 83–92)

The 'room' that Woolf is literally referring to is space, but it is also a metaphor for freedom – especially with regards to creative work.

Eve strives for this autonomy in *Paradise Lost* Book 9. Firstly, she wants separation from Adam. She separates herself in a distant part of the garden. She separates herself from her husband. She seeks a pleasurable change, especially in her work independently during this solitary time.

Eve's need for independence and freedom is also portrayed when she chooses not to eat the forbidden fruit and eats the forbidden fruit. She chooses to break the law of God so that she can be free. She is denied her. When she does this, she shares her newly acquired knowledge with Adam. She and Adam embark on a new path – a path which possibly offers them a new life and restraints.

Activities

Discussion Points

1. Do you think Milton wanted to portray Eve as positively transgressive, or did he see her as a transgression?
2. Does Eve free herself and her husband thanks to her bold deeds? Or, does she remain trapped?
3. Is this text generally feminist or misogynist?

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Paradise Lost and Structuralism

Structuralism is a post-modernist literary approach concerned chiefly with the structure of language. Roland Barthes, structuralism's most important theorist, famously argued that an author is not an originator in a literary text.

To Barthes, an author is an originator of a written work. He argues that a literary text is not originating anything through it. Instead, the writer quotes endless literary works and grand narratives. Barthes proposes that, instead of an author, a scripter rearranges existing, borrowed images, issues and ideas to form a new work (Lodge and Wood (eds), 2008, p. 313-316).

Paradise Lost is based on biblical events and relies on traditional Christian beliefs, settings and characters. Therefore, we could say that it relies on and draws upon a grand narrative which is a grand narrative.

Moreover, there is another grand narrative that *Paradise Lost* quotes from extensively, Greek and Roman mythologies. Milton uses these classical references to add depth and render his epic poem more sophisticated.

Taking the above into consideration, we can say that John Milton is merely a scripter. He uses a story from the Bible as a basis for his own text and he makes use of Greek and Roman culture to add artistic and scholarly depth to it. He uses his superior writing skills to create a new work, new pattern, which offers some new perspectives (such as rendering Satan as a complex character). According to Barthes' theory, Milton is not an author – his work lacks originality, it is a rearrangement of ideas and beliefs, out of ideas put forward by other scripters, over the course of the centuries.

Discussion Points

1. To what extent can Milton be considered as an author of his own text?
2. Do you think that *Paradise Lost* is drawing upon somebody else's earlier ideas?
3. Is it possible to write a text which is original?

Activities

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Alternative Interpretations The Fall of Man as a Positive Event

At A2 Level, you are literary critics, and it is good if you can look for alternative ways of reading. An interesting reading is an original reading, one which does not follow previous and established readings, but which offers new and exciting ones. This is why I present you with this alternative reading.

If we reread our poem and try look at it from a whole new angle, we will be able to interpret the events within it in one of the following alternative readings.

Adam and Eve's fall can be interpreted as a positive ending for *Paradise Lost*. Book 10 marks the end of their life in Paradise, but it also marks the beginning of a new, different life. After committing the original sin, they are no longer ignorant of what Eden and the Earth have to offer. They free themselves from all the constraints imposed on them.

After all, the fall has arisen indirectly through their daily labours and is an effect of their freedom, enforced on Adam and Eve. This is because Eve would not have separated from Adam if she had not experienced the hardships of their gardening work and if she did not feel the need to diversify her life.

The fall could therefore be seen as more of an uprising, a descent into a different world. It is a liberation from Eden's constraints and prohibitions, without the vicious circle of gardening labour. It is an emancipation from God and his authority – especially if the God figure in the text is seen as a tyrannical ruler.

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Glossary

Abstract	an introduction summarising the plot, designed to grab the reader's attention.
Binary opposition	two words or ideas put together despite their antagonistic relationship.
Christian humanist	John Milton's approach to his text, involving a combination of humanism and the Christian religious tradition. As presented in <i>Paradise Lost</i> , it challenges both the human and the religious values.
Discourse	a literary term for communication or conversation (or any speech act).
Dramatic Irony	a literary term referring to the moment in which a statement is made by a character to the audience, but unknown to the character themselves.
Epic poem	a poem telling a lofty tale of a morally elevated hero (fictional or historical) against a background of events crucial to a whole nation or ethnic group.
Ethos	a set of idealised characteristics and traits traditionally associated with a particular group or individual.
Foreshadowing	a literary technique used to communicate what is going to happen in the future. Usually it is a hint in the form of an apparently insignificant detail that leads to the major event that is still to occur in the narrative.
Grand narrative	also referred to as metanarrative , this is a large body of complex narratives that encompasses numerous lesser narratives. Examples of grand narratives include philosophy and science.
Juxtaposition	the placing together of two words, ideas or images, not necessarily in a contrasting way.
Lexis	all the words employed by the writer.
Misogynist	hostile towards women, discrimination against women.
Omniscient	all-knowing.
Pastoral	a genre or mode of literature concerned with the idealised life of the countryside.
Pathetic Fallacy	a kind of personification, in which natural surroundings reflect the mood of the literary scene.
Semantic field	a set of words or images related to one mutual idea. Example: the semantic field 'weather' could include words such as 'rain', 'thunder', 'sun'.
Labyrinth	essentially a maze, or a structure of various and complicated paths that confuse or disorientate the occupant.
Sibilance	the repetition of 's' sounds in close conjunction with one another.
Soliloquy	in drama: a monologue performed by an actor when he or she is alone. A soliloquy offers insights into a character's thoughts and feelings.
Structuralism	a literary approach dedicated solely to the structural analysis of texts. One of the structuralist theorists is Roland Barthes – in his famous essay entitled 'The Death of the Author' written in 1967, he put forward a theory of the author's complete absence from the text.
Sublime	in literature and philosophy, this is a concept of a great and inspiring natural scene that produces a thrilling mixture of awe and terror in its observer. It is often associated with the sublime in nature or religion.
Syntax	the arrangement of words in a sentence structure.
Transcendentalism	in theology: notion suggesting that God is not present in the physical world but in its borders.

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Insider's Exam Advice

I will now share with you some very general hints and tips to sitting any English exam, things which you can put into practice to help you fight stress and feel better in the exam.

- **DON'T PANIC.** This may sound much too general to put into practice, but in your revision, there really is no reason to panic. Once you have done your preparation, enter the exam room and write it all out. It's focus on the question, allow yourself a moment to think, and ideas will all come flooding to you.
- **Bring a bottle of water.** Again, this may sound like you have heard it a thousand times, but if you are starting to wander miles away from the exam room and you just cannot focus, a sip of cool water. It instantly improves circulation and really helps to boost your concentration in exam mode.
- **A day at a time, not an all-nighter.** You really should avoid chunky revision sessions. Make sure you plan your revision so that you revise in regular but short sessions. An all-nighter before your exam is not at all helpful – it will get you unnecessarily stressed and tired. Remember to tell yourself that, when you know you have done your revision, it is best to allow yourself a day off before the exam and just relax. This will relieve your stress and prepare your brain for the exam.
- **Sit tight.** You should not walk out of the exam room before the time finishes. Write everything you possibly could and are happy with it or you feel that you really cannot get past it. There is always a possibility that an idea or two will pop into your head while you are stopped writing. Make the best out of the time you are allowed and stay in the room.
- **Keep referring to the question.** Always keep your question in mind so that you do not write everything you know about one aspect with every paragraph that you write. Refer to yourself of the question and refer to it in your response – this way you will keep a high standard.
- **Tell them what you think!** When you analyse your text, always ask yourself: 'what effect does this technique?' Try to think of what the *meaning* is of a literary device (metaphor, binary opposition, etc.) and not just say it is there. Then, make your analysis of the text with examples supporting your view, every interpretation is right. By trying to look at the structure in this way, you will make your response more creative and more convincing. Remember to tell the examiner what *you* think this or that means!
- **Ditch the intro, focus on the conclusion.** Do not waste time on lengthy introductions. You should briefly state what your argument is going to be, which question you are answering, and the texts you will be analysing. You should also state briefly what your argument is going to prove. This should only take you about two or three sentences. Then go straight into your conclusion. Your conclusion is more important and should be slightly longer. In your conclusion, reiterate your argument and summarise briefly why you think you have proved your point.
- **Be firm!** We cannot be sure of whether an author meant their text to be interpreted in a certain way, therefore any interpretation is valid, as long as you support it with examples from the text. You should be sure of your own argument and confident in what you are saying. Do not let the opinion of that of any other literary critic!
- **Short and sweet quotations.** Although both WJEC and Eduqas are open-book exams, you will be allowed to bring a printed copy of the text in the exam with you, try to use short quotations. This way you do not waste too much time searching for relevant quotations. Use quotations that act as examples for two or more different themes or literary devices.

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Putting it all together!

Context

English Civil War and Restoration era in the seventeenth century.

Milton's religious upbringing and his liberal, anti-royalist views.



Narrator Debate

Milton's anti-censorship and anti-monarchy views can be identified in the text, but is it Milton who speaks or an independent narrator? There is contrasting evidence.

Structure and Form

Epic poem without traditional epic hero.

Blank verse

Dramatic effects – the poem was originally intended to be a tragedy.

Miltonian Language

Syntax – convoluted, complex

Latinisms – Latin in words and syntax



Iambic pentameter – creates rhythm and a lifelike speech effect

Binary oppositions – create tensions in the narrative

Rhetoric – evident in Satan's, Adam's and Eve's speeches

Literary Approaches

Feminism – Eve could be seen either as a transgression, or a bold female who challenges patriarchal rule and gains freedom.

Historicism – the text relies heavily on historical characters and contains references to real events. Can Milton be therefore seen as a historian, or is he a scripter drawing on history?

Characters

Adam and Eve – first married couple, but with ambiguity as to who is more influential.

Satan – wronged and vengeful character, but sympathetic because we are enabled to understand his feelings and emotions.

God – not physically present, but his voice and punishment is evident at the end of the poem.

Key Themes

The pastoral – idyllic, rural landscape. Satan's arrival is challenged on numerous occasions, described as 'Thicket'.

Worship – Adam and Eve worship God before the Fall of Knowledge.

Transgressive femininity – Eve as a woman who challenges patriarchal rule.

Temptation and sin

Separation – Eve separates from Adam, and Adam separates from God.

The sublime – religious and natural awe and admiration in Adam and Eve.

Interpretations

Civil War and Restoration – the poem debates on the Restoration. 'Paradise lost' is the loss of the traditional, hierarchical, monarchical government.

Censorship – the 'Tree of Knowledge forbidden' is a metaphor for censorship of press and religion. Milton's argument against censorship.

Growing role of women in the Restoration – Eve as a bold, active woman, such as the newly formed priestesses.



Milton's view on divorce – Adam and Eve as an incompatible married couple.

First romance – the poem as a prototype for romance with its focus on romantic love.

Alternative reading – the fall of man as a positive event, representing the breaking free from prohibitions.

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Further Reading

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Answers

Section	Suggested Answers
Section One	<p>Discussion Points</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student's own response; however, it does appear that Milton is encouraged to be sympathetic towards Satan, due to the amount of emotive lexis and imagery used. 2. Student's own creative response 3. The Fall of Man is foreshadowed, '... bent on Man's destruction' (line 162)
Section Two	<p>Discussion Points</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student's own response, there is evidence to support Milton desires a stronger character. Eve arguably appears a stronger character due to her transgression and her attempt to assert her dominance, so the reader may sympathise with Adam's treatment of Eve as submissive and subordinate to his husband. However, the reader may also be encouraged to sympathise with Eve. 2. Milton's presentation of marriage is arguably misogynistic, as Eve is subject to the commands of her husband and subject to his protection. However, Eve's assertion of her dominance, and the final description of her 'withdrawing' her hand from Adam, may encourage itself to a feminist reading.
Section Three	<p>Discussion Points</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eve appears just as feminine and beautiful in this section as in the previous section. She may appear more powerful since leaving the company of her husband, and her appearance may be a reflection of the appearance she gave in the previous section due to her acknowledgement of her persuasive discourse 2. Student's own response <p>Essay Question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eve appears doomed in this section from the opening lines that reveal her fate • Eve consequently appears vulnerable and naïve in this section, where she is pragmatic in the previous section in her rationalising of the manual labour • Eve appears more powerful by her feminine presentation and beauty as the reader is encouraged to sympathise with her, whereas descriptions of her beauty in the previous section are more objective and scholarly
Section Four	<p>Discussion Points</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student's own response, but these could include flattery, repetition, simile and metaphor 2. Student's own response
Section Five	<p>Discussion Points</p> <p>Student's own response is encouraged for all points here</p>
Section Six	<p>Discussion Points</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adam and Eve's love could appear one-sided and unequal, as Eve argues that Adam should rather suffer than her be alone; therefore, it is possible that Adam loves Eve more. However, it could be argued that Eve loves Adam more, as she initially has good feelings towards him, she eats the fruit, and her resistance to living without him arguably reflects her love for him 2. Student's own response <p>Essay Question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milton's presentation of love appears more complex, as he presents evidence of both positive and negative emotion/evne • Milton portrays love as a positive experience in his description of Adam's reaction to Eve, '... best of all God's works... amiable, or sweet!' (line 1000) and the joy and adoration that comes with falling in love • Milton arguably also portrays love as a negative experience in his description of the Fall, as illustrated in the lines 'lost, defaced, deflowered, and now to death devoted' (line 1000). It could be argued that it was Eve's love for Adam that caused her to eat the fruit, and that Adam and Eve would prosper together in its effects • Milton arguably presents love in a positive light as he appears to encourage faithfulness and commitment, as Adam does not wish to live without Eve

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Section	Suggested Answers
	<p><i>can I live without thee! how forgo thy sweet converse, and love so dearly joined, to live again in these wild woods forlorn'</i> (lines 908–910)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, Milton could also be using this aspect of love to cast it in a negative and dangerous light. Adam is willing to put himself in danger and break his relationship with God as a result of his love for Eve; therefore, love appears to involve an element of self-sacrifice
Section Seven	<p>Discussion Points</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student's own response; however, there is arguably a more overwhelming argument for Eve being blamed for the Fall, as throughout the poem she is characterised as a temptress and frequently blamed for the fate of mankind, e.g. <i>'... and into fraud led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree of prohibited fruit, the root of all our woe'</i> (lines 643–645) 2. Student's own response <p>Essay Question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student's own response is encouraged; however, there appears an overwhelming argument for Milton's negative presentation of Adam. The final lines illustrate man's eternal damnation, grief and woe, and his state of being. • However, Adam and Eve's love for one another, even after the Fall of Man, is maintained and, therefore, this could be seen as a positive presentation of man's loyalty, commitment and togetherness
The Author/ Narrator Difficulties – Who Really Speaks?	<p>Text Transformation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student's own creative response encouraged <p>Discussion Points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The narrator acts as guide throughout the tale, and is also used by Milton to control the reader's emotions through literary devices such as foreshadowing. The role of the narrator could be seen as arguably more important than the characters as the narrator is all-seeing, and could, therefore, be seen as the eyes of God. On the other hand, the narrator's voice could be seen as inferior to the voices of the many characters as the narrative voice is considerably more removed than each character's personal account of the tale, each of which is intensified by Milton's use of emotive lexis in his characterisations of Adam, Eve and Satan. 2. The narrator could be seen as reliable or unreliable. Arguably could be seen as reliable as he could be seen as the voice of God, and, therefore, as omnipotent, or contrastingly the narrator could be seen as having ulterior motives that could impact the relaying of events in the tale, as the opinion of the narrator occasionally infiltrates the narrative, e.g. his presentations of natives in lines 1100–1120. 3. Student's own response <p>Student's own response; however, there is evidence that Milton's own attitudes and values did heavily influence his relaying of the tale. As seen in the above example in his representation of natives, but also Milton's use of the personal pronoun 'I' in the opening of the text, and also the frequent allusions to classical arts and symbolism in the poem</p>
Characters	<p>Discussion Points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For instance, Milton's language provides a heavily gendered presentation of the characters, and appears to assign blame to Eve for the Fall of Man, as even before there is evidence of her transgression Milton appears to suggest that she cannot be trusted / is not as innocent as initially thought 2. Student's own response, but it is likely that the reader sympathises with Adam, and possibly even Satan, but fails to sympathise with the character of Eve 3. Student's own response, but, for instance, Adam is arguably the most likeable character due to his portrayal as innocent in the initial temptations scene, along with his portrayal as a devoted, loving and selfless husband 4. The representation of Satan appears problematic as Satan is arguably likeable, as Milton creates an incredibly sympathetic presentation of Satan, as he focuses on the misery caused by his punishment from God. This could be further problematised as, even if Satan does not appear incredibly likeable, the character appears more likeable than Eve's. 5. Student's own response, but, for instance, Satan ironically emphasises his power as all the characters appear deferential to God and Satan in fear of disobeying his commandments; or contrastingly God's reluctance to suggest the reason that Adam and Eve stray from him is as his lack of intimacy with them in this section causes them to doubt his love for them

Section	Suggested Answers
	<p>Essay Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of characters is arguably faithful to the Bible's presentation of the story • Readers shockingly are encouraged to sympathise with the character of Satan, see Milton's use of emotive language and his emphasis on Eve's role in the temptation scene • Gender roles do, however, appear conventional, as Eve is cast as a female temptress of man, with man, through the character of Adam as Eve's husband, is placed in a superior role as 'protector' of his wife • Negative portrayal of Eve as temptress and positive portrayal of Adam as the faithful and selfless husband appears conventional to the Bible's portrayal of the tale
Character Relationships	<p>Discussion Points</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student's own response; however, in his exploration of the creation myth Milton likely wanted to shed new light or a new reading on an ancient text, and, therefore, wished to reverse the traditions presented in every way he could, e.g. use of the word 'serpent' in a religious rather than pagan context 2. Student's own response; however, Adam and Eve arguably have a relationship through the character of Eve. Both are enamoured by Eve, and both are connected to Eve's fall. Adam is the victim of Eve's actions, and consequently the cyclical element to the narrative.
Genre	<p>Discussion Points</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student's own response; however, Milton 'recreated' many conventions of the epic poem in his retelling of the creation myth, and, therefore, reinvented new forms such as the pastoral, the 'epic hero', etc. 2. Student's own response; however, the poem can be seen as a romance, as the narrative centres around Adam and Eve, who are in a romantic relationship. However, on the other hand, the pessimistic and tainting of their love arguably complicates this reading.
Themes	<p>Discussion Points</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student's own response; however, there is perhaps a stronger argument for Eve being presented as ignorant, and, therefore, naïve and disobedient in her straying from Adam and God to Satan. However, Milton could be perhaps trying to revert or rebel against the original creation myth and, therefore, could be presenting Eve as independent and strong. 2. Milton's presentation of Eve as overtly feminine, delicate, and beautiful, and, therefore, a severe contrast to the 'savagery' suggested by her actions (see previous paragraph on the theme of 'Vivification' for information on the 'savagery' of animism). The Eve of God, and the Eve of Satan appear as two opposing positions. 3. Student's own response. A consideration of Milton's presentation of worship in Book 9 is recommended, as this illustrates a tendency among humanity to shift their focus of worship onto objects of beauty (Eve's admiration of Satan's serpent form, and profit (the Tree of Knowledge)).
Language and Its Effects – Milton's Techniques	<p>Discussion Points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Satan's argument is persuasive. Eve is mostly persuaded by the fact that Satan himself has appeared to her, and has eaten from the tree. She may have lived to tell the tale despite God's promises. Satan uses a variety of rhetorical devices to persuade Eve, including rhetorical questions, rule of three, hyperbole, and emotive lexis. Satan's rhetorical devices are effective in causing Eve to doubt her faith in God. 2. Milton's lexis is heavily linked with imagery in the poem, as he uses semantic fields to create a tone and atmosphere, especially in his depiction of Satan. In particular, Milton uses lexis to control the reader's direction of sympathising towards the characters of his poem, e.g. the reader is encouraged to sympathise with Satan, and is discouraged from sympathising with Eve. 3. Student's own response, but overall Milton's creation of mood in the poem is largely successful. Each character in the poem appears to possess their own mood that surrounds them. Milton is successful in depicting a mood within the Garden itself, predominantly through a use of pathetic fallacy. <p>Essay Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of emotive lexis in Milton's depictions of Eden pre and post Fall, particularly effective when juxtaposed, e.g. lines 192–200 vs lines 782–784 and 1000–1004 • Use of pathetic fallacy and personification in presentations of Eden, with Mother Nature, e.g. lines 782–784 and 1000–1004 • Use of sensual lexis in the scene in which Adam is seduced by Eve, e.g. lines 1000–1004

Section	Suggested Answers
Form and Structure	<p>Discussion Points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student's own response 2. The significance of the blank verse could be Milton's way of making the ancient 'new' again, as he uses blank verse, which was considered relatively new at the time, also adhering to classical standards of writing (e.g. Roman, Greek) 3. Milton's adherence to ancient modes of writing could possibly be an attempt to lend legitimacy to his version of the creation myth <p>Essay Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epic form and blank verse have a legitimating effect on the poem, giving it mythological status • Also arguably legitimises Milton's poetic voice, as he appears one of the great poets of the age, therefore, is arguably given the status to write this epic tale • Theatrical structure of the poem, in particular the character monologues, proves that characters of this tale are brought to life by Milton, and arguably encourages the reader to sympathise with the character of Satan • Blank verse gives something 'contemporary' to the poem, also emphasising Milton's version of the ancient tale
Context	<p>Discussion Points</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student's own response; however, Milton's characterisations definitely lend the presentation that encourages the reader to sympathise with Satan, and to look at Adam and Eve and their 'just' punishment 2. Student's own response. Although the concluding image of Adam and Eve's union appears pessimistic as both are eternally damned and consequently unhappy, the suggestion from Milton that the pair no longer love each other
Literary Approaches to <i>Paradise Lost</i>	<p>Feminism</p> <p>Discussion Points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student's own response, but there arguably appears more evidence in the poem of Eve, as Eve appears transgressive in her opening responses to Adam's concern against Satan, while also appearing weak-willed in her interactions with Satan, and encouraging of Adam to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree 2. Student's own response; however, although man does appear free to resist the will of God, man does appear forever enslaved to his sinful origins in the Garden of Eden. Milton's contrasting presentation of the Garden of Eden pre and post Fall lends itself to a reading, as Earth appears less idyllic following the Fall. 3. Student's own response, but the evidence for a misogynistic reading arguably appears stronger, as Eve is immediately characterised by Milton as 'tempted', even before the evidence of her weakness at the site of the Tree of Eden. Eve is expected to conform to the gender roles prescribed to her by her husband Adam, and is largely submissive on her part. <p>Structuralism</p> <p>Discussion Points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student's own response. There arguably appears evidence for both sides of this argument. It does not appear the author of the creation myth, as this dates back to the beginning of time, origins in the Bible. However, Milton's recasting of the characters within the tale, and the manipulation of whom the reader is supposed to sympathise with and his use of blank verse form arguably provides Milton with rights of authorship. 2. Student's own response 3. Student's own response

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