

1. Theme of Social Class in Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw.

Answer:1. Class is shown through language

In the play, Shaw shows that a person's social class is judged mainly by how they speak.

Eliza Doolittle, a poor flower girl, speaks in a rough Cockney accent.

Professor Henry Higgins believes that by teaching her "proper English," he can make her appear like a lady. This shows that language, not birth, decides social status in society.

2. Transformation of Eliza

Eliza's change from a poor girl to a refined lady proves that class differences are artificial.

After training, people treat her as a high-class woman.

But inside, she is still the same person.

Shaw suggests that social class is only a superficial (outer) identity.

3. Criticism of upper-class society

Shaw criticizes the upper class for being shallow and judgmental.

They judge people by accent, manners, and appearance.

They fail to recognize true character and humanity.

4. Eliza's struggle for identity

Even after becoming "lady-like," Eliza feels confused:

She does not belong to the lower class anymore.

But she is not fully accepted in the upper class either.

This shows how rigid class divisions can create identity problems.

5. Equality of human beings

Through characters like Eliza and Alfred Doolittle, Shaw shows that:

People from lower classes can be intelligent and capable.

All humans deserve respect, regardless of class.

Conclusion:

In *Pygmalion*, Shaw challenges the idea of fixed social classes. He shows that class is not natural but created by society, especially through language and behavior. The play ultimately promotes equality and human dignity.

2. Character of Eliza Doolittle in *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw.

Answer: The character of Eliza Doolittle in *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw is one of the most powerful and memorable in modern drama. She represents transformation, self-respect, and social mobility.

1. Background of Eliza Doolittle.

Eliza is a poor flower girl from the streets of London. She speaks in a strong Cockney accent, which marks her as belonging to the lower class. At the beginning, she struggles to survive by selling flowers.

2. Her Transformation

Eliza becomes part of an experiment by Professor Henry Higgins, a phonetics expert, who promises to transform her into a “lady” by teaching her proper English pronunciation and manners. She learns to speak politely and correctly. She adopts refined behavior. Eventually, she successfully passes as a duchess in high society. This shows that language and manners—not birth—define social class.

3. Strength of Character Eliza is not just a passive learner; she is strong, determined, and independent. She works very hard to improve herself. She stands up to Higgins when he treats her badly. She demands respect and dignity.

4. Growth and Self-Realization

By the end of the play, Eliza realizes her self-worth. She refuses to remain dependent on Higgins. She chooses her own path in life. She proves she is more than Higgins’s experiment. Her famous realization: she is a human being with feelings, not an object to be shaped.

5. Symbolic Importance

Eliza symbolizes:

Social mobility (rising from poverty to high society)

Feminine independence

Critique of class system in society

Conclusion: Eliza Doolittle's character evolves from a poor, uneducated girl into a confident, self-respecting woman. Through her journey, Shaw shows that true refinement comes not just from speech, but from inner dignity and self-respect.

3. Role of Language and Speech in Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw.

Answer:

1. Language shows social class. In the play, how a person speaks determines their status in society.

Eliza's Cockney accent makes her seem poor and uneducated. When she learns proper pronunciation, people treat her like a lady. Shaw shows that society judges people by their speech, not their real abilities.

2. Speech as a tool of transformation

Higgins believes that by changing Eliza's speech, he can change her identity. Eliza successfully transforms into a refined woman just by improving her language. This proves that language has the power to reshape a person's life.

3. Language and power

Higgins uses language as a way to control and dominate Eliza. He treats her like an experiment rather than a human being. Shaw criticizes how educated people sometimes use knowledge to control others.

4. Language vs. true identity

Even after learning proper speech, Eliza struggles with who she really is. Shaw suggests that language alone cannot define a person's true self.

5. Criticism of class system

The play shows that the difference between classes is often artificial. If speech can be learned, then class differences are not natural but socially created. Conclusion. In Pygmalion, language and speech are not just ways of communication—they define social class, act as a tool for transformation, show power relationships.

4. Character of Professor Higgins in Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw.

1. Brilliant but Arrogant

Higgins is a highly intelligent phonetics expert who can identify a person's background just by hearing their speech. However, he is extremely proud and arrogant, often looking down on others, especially those from lower classes.

2. Emotionally Insensitive

He treats people like experiments rather than human beings. For example, he sees Eliza as a “project” to prove his theory, not as a person with feelings.

He is rude, blunt, and careless in speech

He rarely says “thank you” or shows appreciation

3. Obsessed with Language and Science

Higgins is deeply passionate about language and pronunciation. His main goal is to prove that speech determines social class, and he works hard to transform Eliza’s accent.

4. Childlike Personality

Despite being an adult, Higgins behaves like a spoiled child:

He depends on others (like his housekeeper) for daily needs

He shows immaturity and lack of responsibility

He gets irritated when things don’t go his way

5. Independent and Anti-Social Norms

Higgins does not care about social rules or manners:

He rejects traditional politeness

He does not believe in marriage or romance

He values freedom and individuality

6. Lack of Personal Growth (Debatable)

Unlike Eliza, Higgins does not change much throughout the play. Some critics say:

He remains self-centered and insensitive

Others argue he shows slight awareness at the end

☒ Conclusion

Professor Higgins is a complex character—a genius in language but lacking emotional intelligence. Through him, Shaw criticizes class distinction and social behavior, showing that true refinement is not just about speech but also about kindness and respect.

▣ 5. Significance of the Title *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw.

The title of *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw is very meaningful and symbolic. Its significance can be understood in the following ways:

1. Connection to the Greek Myth

The title comes from the ancient story of Pygmalion, a sculptor who created a statue of a woman so beautiful that he fell in love with it. The statue later came to life.

□ Similarly, Professor Higgins “creates” a new Eliza by teaching her how to speak and behave like a lady.

2. Transformation Theme

The title highlights the central theme of transformation.

Eliza Doolittle, a poor flower girl, is transformed into a refined lady.

This shows how external factors like language and manners can change a person’s social identity.

3. Power and Control

Just like Pygmalion controlled his creation, Higgins tries to control Eliza’s transformation.

□ The title reflects the power dynamics between creator (Higgins) and creation (Eliza).

4. Criticism of Social Class System

Shaw uses the title to question whether such transformation is real or just superficial.

Is Eliza truly changed, or is it only her accent and appearance?

□ The title hints at Shaw’s criticism of rigid class distinctions in society.

5. Irony in the Title

Unlike the myth, Eliza is not just a passive creation.

She becomes independent and challenges Higgins.

□ This makes the title ironic—Eliza is not merely a “creation,” but a strong individual.

Conclusion

The title Pygmalion is significant because it symbolizes creation, transformation, control, and social critique, while also introducing irony by showing that human beings cannot be shaped like lifeless objects.

▣ 6. Theme of Independence and Identity in Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw.

□ 1. Identity as a Social Construct

In the play, identity is shown as something not fixed, but shaped by external factors like language, class, and behavior.

Eliza, a poor flower girl, is judged by her accent and manners.

Professor Higgins transforms her speech, and suddenly society accepts her as a “lady.”

□ This shows that identity depends more on how others perceive you than on who you truly are.

□ 2. Language and Identity

Language plays a powerful role in defining identity.

Higgins believes that by changing Eliza’s way of speaking, he can change her entire identity.

Eliza’s success proves that speech is a key marker of class and identity in society.

□ Shaw criticizes a society where a person’s worth is judged by their accent rather than their character.

□ 3. Struggle for Independence

Eliza’s journey is not just about transformation—it is about gaining independence.

At first, she is dependent on Higgins for training and social status.

After the experiment, she realizes she does not belong to either the lower or upper class.

□ She faces a crisis:

Who is she now? Where does she belong?

□ 4. Eliza’s Assertion of Identity

The turning point comes when Eliza asserts her independence:

She refuses to be treated as Higgins’ “creation.”

She decides to make her own choices about her future.

□ This highlights Shaw’s message:

True identity comes from self-respect and independence, not from others' control.

□ 5. Criticism of Social Class System

Shaw uses Eliza's story to criticize rigid class distinctions.

If a flower girl can become a "lady" just by changing her speech, then class differences are artificial.

Identity is shown as something imposed by society, not naturally determined.

✦✦ Conclusion

In Pygmalion, Shaw presents identity as fluid and socially constructed, while independence is shown as a personal achievement. Through Eliza's journey, he emphasizes that:

□ A person must define their own identity rather than accept one imposed by society.