



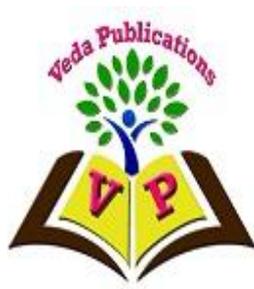
TEACHING SOFT SKILLS THROUGH LITERATURE

D. Vijayalakshmi

(The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad 500605.)

Email: vennala137@gmail.com

ABSTRACT



The genre of prose in English was possibly the most prolific one at the time English began to be used for creative expression by people. Some of the most outstanding creative and intellectual giants of the country to put forward their views on social, political, economic, cultural, spiritual and other fields have used the genre of prose, right from the extensive work of Raja Ram Mohan Roy to the present time. The innumerable themes and topics included in the genre of prose make it available to sustain frames which need not necessarily have been included into the essays by the writers themselves. Moreover, it is here that the soft skills orientation of these pieces can be successfully researched.

There are mainly two functions provided by literature: one is to provide pleasure and other is to educate which projects the idea of *Art for Art's sake* and for the society's sake as well. The objective of any language is supposed to provide the learner a life span of contact all the way through the written and spoken expressions. The present paper intends at giving emphasis on making use of literature as a popular practice for teaching a few soft skills of our period. It is stated that teaching soft skills through literature is a thrilling and diverse approach to language learning and it makes the language learning procedure possible.

Keywords: *Prose, Themes, Soft Skills, Literature, Teaching, Language.*

Citation:

APA Vijayalakshmi, D. (2018) Teaching Soft Skills through Literature. *Veda's Journal of English Language and Literature-JOELL*, 5(1), 76-78.

MLA Vijayalakshmi, D. "Teaching Soft Skills through Literature." *Veda's Journal of English Language and Literature JOELL*, Vol.5, no.1, 2018, pp.76-78.

**INTRODUCTION**

Soft skills are also called life skills or key skills for a balanced living. Without inculcating these skills the other 'hard skills' don't serve as models of emulation and transformation. The real appreciation of a work of art must include the impact that it has on others: in Indian system of thoughts, this is called *phalasaruti*. In the pedagogic scenario of higher education, this type of an orientation is needed at present and the topic I have chosen has immense potential for research. Since literature is considered a mirror of society, it obviously includes all human experience of which skills are just one part. Therefore, to use literary texts as the basis of identifying and explicating the skills is a novel manner to introduce soft skills in classroom contexts. Usually these skills are imparted with western models of real-time experiences that may not have the same cultural connotations when they are borrowed by other cultures. For instance, patterns of behavior are culture specific and one pattern is laudable in a specific culture may be considered negative in another culture.

Based on the significance of this point of view, using the prose works of English writers to find corresponding skills for pedagogic purposes is the main thrust of the present paper. For this, a few literary works have been selected. The choice is because the text represents a crucial dimension of experience. By analyzing the texts, most of the significant aspects of human experience will be covered and therefore the skills orientation will have a wide canvas.

Following are a few soft skills:

- i. Positive thinking
- ii. Stress management
- iii. Time management
- iv. Decision making
- v. Self confidence
- vi. Goal setting
- vii. Leadership mastery
- viii. Change management
- ix. Positive living
- x. Public speaking
- xi. Emotional management
- xii. Good writing skills
- xiii. Effective communication

- xiv. Interpersonal skills
- xv. Conflict Management skills
- xvi. Self-motivation and initiative
- xvii. Team work and collaboration skills

CRITICAL THINKING**GOAL SETTING**

Setting goals help us to take cognizant and actual steps to obtain what we desire to achieve in life. Smart goal setting ensures procedures to assist the reach goals. So, you should not postpone setting your goals for next day, set your goals and objectives at the moment as the life is always ahead of you.

Here is a statement from *The Old man and the Sea*: "To hell with luc"Que va," the boy said, "It is what a man must do." "Success" is often understood to be the symbol of the value of a human being. However, success itself simply speaks to a meticulous position and may not have anything to do with the voyage that the man acquired to get there, or whether or not he preserved his honesty along the way. Among the various parts of the narrative, it is the thought of redefining success that puts together *The Old Man and the Sea* so thoughtful.

WILL POWER

A man is not made for defeat or as Hemingway puts it: "A man can be destroyed but not defeated." A man goes on to do anything he ought to do to the best of his capability, no matter what troubles come in his way. While problems and setbacks can stripe a man of the entire external symbols of success, still his strength can stay undefeated. For it can force a man to quit or continue trying harder.

SELF CONFIDENCE

"A man goes down swinging, no matter his age." Elderly age is a general reason, and for definite things it is genuine, when the sharks start attacking Santiago's marlin, at the beginning, he doubts whether he cannot protect himself because of his age, but after a while, he gathers his tools to be used as weaponry and does what he ought to. Throughout the battle, the sun sets off and Santiago is surprised, "What will you do now if they come in the night? What can you do?" He digs deep. "Fight them," he says, "I'll fight them until I die." even if the crook in due course shred Santiago's marlin apart, they do not defeat him as a man, and he in no way gives up.



EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT

Managing of anger, annoyance, stress and other feelings is very essential for any person. Therefore, the learners are supposed to be trained how to handle their emotions. Thomas Hardy's novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is a literary work that helps us learn how powerful feelings like annoyance, distrust, etc., will destroy the life of a human being. As per Hardy, an opportunity is a something that we have no control over. On the other hand, this force drives without cognizant purpose, and, even though it stands for the motivation of the world, it gives the impression to bring into being.

DECISION MAKING SKILLS

Taking right decision at right time is very essential in all aspects of human life, mainly for a learner. The rate of indecisiveness or wavering in making an absolute decision may be represented by the nature of prince Hamlet in a play *Hamlet- the prince of Denmark* by Shakespeare. His procrastination expenses his precious life. In the play the prince of Denmark states, "To be or not to be that is the question..." He constantly wastes times in thoughts than making concrete decision. Decision-making is essential in the life of a human being, particularly students in career selection or further studies. They ought to decide the correct path out of various existing choices.

Robert Frost's poem *The Road Not Taken* is a fine example which helps us in teaching the learners the importance of making choices in life and coming to a precise decision. The poem proposes an interesting twofold viewpoint on the idea of making preferences, with one point of view quite clear and the other more restrained. The speaker in *The Road Not Taken* arrives at a place where his pathway deviates in a yellow forest. He doubts that he can only select one. In the end, he chooses the one that has seen been the least used; ultimately, that makes a noteworthy distinction in his life.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The only unvarying thing in the natural world is change. Whether the people or learners, each person has to go alongside with the shifting atmosphere and should adapt himself to the challenging state of affairs. "Look abroad through nature's range; nature's mighty law is change". As

asserted by Lord Byron. This statement facilitates the teacher in calling attention to the certainty of transform in life and significance of running it.

As discussed above, with the help of different literary texts like poetry, prose, short stories, fiction, etc. the students at school and college level can be taught essential soft skills.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [1]. Ashok, T. (2015). Imparting Soft skills through Literature. *International Journal of Academic Research*. Vol.2, Issue-3(5).
- [2]. Frost, R. (1975). *The road not taken*. Stemmer House Publishers.
- [3]. Hardy, T. (2004). *The mayor of Casterbridge*. OUP Oxford.
- [4]. Hemingway, E. M. (2007). *The old man and the sea*. Al Manhal.
- [5]. Karthi, L., & Mahalakshmi, M. (2014). Softskills Through Elt Classrooms. *Research Journal of English Language and Literature* (3), 328-331.
- [6]. Shakespeare, W. (1909). *Tragedy of Hamlet, the*. Boston: Ginn & Company.
- [7]. <https://www.enotes.com/topics/road-not-taken>