

## FLORA IN LITERATURE

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### Abstract:

Literatures are written works. The term literature is derived from the Latin word, *litaritura/litteratura* which means 'writing formed with letters'. Some scholars argue that literatures have written forms, spoken forms and lyric (song) forms. In literature, one can find the usage of nature, society, human, spirits, and so on. Of these, the nature including flora are quite interesting. Flora refers to the plants which live in a region. Plants are found in the paintings, sculptures, literature, etc. in the ancient and modern ages. Flora is known as flower in Latin language. Flora is used in literature by many writers. Literature includes, prose, poetry, novel, short story, essay, fiction and many more. Many famous literary works talk about the plants and trees including flora. As flora is mentioned in many novels, short stories, and essays, it is mentioned in poems too. This article tries to deal with the poems written by the authors from various countries who have set the flower names to the title of their poems. Many poets have written poems with flora. This article is limited to a few poems written by William Wordsworth, Sylvia Plath, Sara Jewett and Toru Dutt. The flora found in these poems is explained with the literary background.

Keywords: flora, society, environment, poem, literature

### 1.0 Introduction

Literature is the mirror of life, society and environment. Literature talks about the world elements sometimes even imaginary elements. It reflects even the greenery of the world including flowers, plants, trees, fruits, etc. It is a known fact that flowers have its own biological nature. In literature, it is personified or sometimes the writers are overwhelmed by the beauty of nature and it will be the cause for the outcome of creativity. Flora can be said as the plants naturally occurring in a particular area. The term 'flora' is derived from the Latin name and it means flower. But, in Greek, flora was a goddess known as *Khloris*. The term was coined by a French botanist, Jules Thurmann. The flora of a region is important in aesthetic, environmental and economic terms (Pereira, Maria da Conceição, et.al, 2016). From the early period, all over the country, the writers used to describe flora and fauna in their writings. It is lovely to read and admire the beauty and wonders of the world. This paper tries to deal with the poems written by the authors from various countries who have set the flower names to the title of their poems.

### 2.0 Methodology

The study is based on the table research method or library research method. The research methodology adopted is based on secondary data available in printed and electronic media. The required data were collected by in-depth reading of material from classical sources in the field of English literature. Doubtful vocabularies and meanings were solved through the discussions with subject experts of literature. The data are limited with the poems of William Wordsworth, Sylvia Plath, Sara Jewett and Toru Dutt.

### 3.0 The Daffodils

A daffodils is a spherical European plant which naturally bears dark yellow flowers with a long trumpet-shaped center and the flower symbolizes of rebirth and hope. This flower was used by the poet, William Wordsworth. In the poem "The Daffodils", William Wordsworth was

greatly impressed by the beauty of the Daffodils which was written in 1804 when he came across an acre of daffodils in the Lake District of England.

Though the poet wanted to express his feelings, it depicts the landscape of his region. He had written that he was overwhelmed by the beauty of daffodils which comforted him and his mind started to dance with the daffodils. It gave him new energy and became fresh in thinking and began to feel that he was not alone in this world. From this, we could understand the environment where they lived and the daffodils are found in European countries.

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

The poet further described that place where it was grown and the colour of the flowers. It is mentioned by using the terms "Beside the lake and a host of golden daffodils". It gives visual image of the landscape of the region.

#### **4.0 Tulips**

Tulips are a classic flower which symbolizes perfection and deep love (Symbolsage, 2020). In the poem "Tulips", Sylvia Plath, who was an American novelist and poet describes the beauty of the flowers

"The tulips are too excitable, it is winter here.  
Look how white everything is, how quiet, how snowed-in"

In the poem "Tulips", it depicts a picture of a woman recovering from an operation and staying in a room. She compares her room which is surrounded by white colour environment such as bed and walls in hospital to winter season which will be full of snow and boring. She mentions that tulips are also "excitable". Though the narrator doesn't like the tulip flowers, she uses in the lines. In fact, she never wants the tulips as she feels that the tulips occupy her space. She wants to lie in her bed and be empty, free and peaceful. She describes the colour of the flowers by using the term 'the redness'. By the following lines, we could understand that the red colour tulips are available in America as the author is an American. Though there are many colours in tulips, the poet refers to red colour tulips which reminds her pain and the colour of the wound.

"The tulips are too red in the first place, they hurt me.

.....  
Their redness talks to my wound, it corresponds."

.....

#### **5.0 A Wild Rose**

In the poem "A Wild Rose" which is written by Sara Jewett depicts the colour and the fragrance of the rose amidst tangled woods and ways which blooms during summer season. The poet enjoys nature and her blissfulness is seen in the lines of the poem. She expresses that the odors makes us to embrace both joy and pain alike. The environment of their place is portrayed in the beginning of the poem that makes us to imagine that there are many pink roses in the woods. That shows the beauty of nature in South Berwick, Maine.

"A blushing wild pink rose,  
By tangled woods and ways,

A passing sweet that goes  
With summer days”

The picturization of the environment is plenty of flowers amidst woods and it depicts the fertility of the land. Though literature reflects the culture and emotions of the poet, it also reflects their environment. The reader can understand the place where they belong to.

### **6.0 The Lotus**

Toru Dutt had written a poem “The Lotus”. Dutt was an Indian basically but educated in Britain and France during her childhood. In this poem, she wanted to insist that her culture and religion is superior to western culture. In this article, it should be mentioned that the poet belonged to India and might have seen Lotus in the ponds and lakes in India whereas it is not available in other countries. Moreover, the Lotus is found almost in the artificial lakes around Temples in India. People used to offer it to God in the temple. From this, we could understand that the poet had seen the lotus in India and she could not admire the beauty of other flowers as she had felt that the Lotus is the Queen of all the flowers.

“Give me a flower delicious as the rose  
And stately as the lily in her pride”-

“But of what colour?” – “the Rose-Red.” Love first chose,

And “Lily-white,” = the queenliest flower that blows.” – *The Lotus*

The poet describes the colour of the flower is neither a rose red nor a lily -white. Thus she mentioned in the poem. It shows that the poet belonged to India and still she loves India and its environment.

### **7.0 Conclusion**

By using Flora in literature, the writers tried to use flowers as symbols, simile, metaphor, and personification. Yet the flowers reflect the biological nature of its environment where it could be grown up and planted. Moreover, as Seaton (1989) mentioned, ‘flowers have their biological roles in the life of the plants but their role in the cultures of the people who appreciate them is an interesting example’, the poets use flowers as an appreciation. Most of the poetry readers are nature lovers. They sit on mountains or green fields and sing poems like William Wordsworth, John Keats and so on. The article has explained the importance of flora and the use of flora in poems.

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