

SEMESTER 3 BA PROGRAM
BRITISH POETRY
SEPTEMBER- E CONTENT FOR BACKGROUND READINGS

The following poetry will be as a part of assignment for this semester.
Please read it, create vocabulary, look for literary devices.
Prepare a biographical note on Jonathan Swift.

TEXT:

A Beautiful Young Nymph Going to Bed

BY JONATHAN SWIFT

Corinna, pride of Drury-Lane
For whom no shepherd sighs in vain;
Never did Covent Garden boast
So bright a battered, strolling toast;
No drunken rake to pick her up,
No cellar where on tick to sup;
Returning at the midnight hour;
Four stories climbing to her bow'r;

Then, seated on a three-legged chair,
Takes off her artificial hair:
Now, picking out a crystal eye,
She wipes it clean, and lays it by.
Her eye-brows from a mouse's hide,
Stuck on with art on either side,
Pulls off with care, and first displays 'em,
Then in a play-book smoothly lays 'em.
Now dexterously her plumpers draws,
That serve to fill her hollow jaws.
Untwists a wire; and from her gums
A set of teeth completely comes.
Pulls out the rags contrived to prop
Her flabby dugs and down they drop.
Proceeding on, the lovely goddess
Unlaces next her steel-ribbed bodice;
Which by the operator's skill,
Press down the lumps, the hollows fill,
Up goes her hand, and off she slips
The bolsters that supply her hips.

With gentlest touch, she next explores
Her shankers, issues, running sores,
Effects of many a sad disaster;
And then to each applies a plaister.
But must, before she goes to bed,
Rub off the dawbs of white and red;
And smooth the furrows in her front
With greasy paper stuck upon't.
She takes a bolus ere she sleeps;
And then between two blankets creeps.
With pains of love tormented lies;
Or if she chance to close her eyes,
Of Bridewell and the Compter dreams,
And feels the lash, and faintly screams;
Or, by a faithless bully drawn,
At some hedge-tavern lies in pawn;
Or to Jamaica seems transported,
Alone, and by no planter courted;
Or, near Fleet-Ditch's oozy brinks,
Surrounded with a hundred stinks,

Belated, seems on watch to lie,
And snap some cully passing by;
Or, struck with fear, her fancy runs
On watchmen, constables and duns,
From whom she meets with frequent rubs;
But, never from religious clubs;
Whose favor she is sure to find,
Because she pays 'em all in kind.

Corinna wakes. A dreadful sight!
Behold the ruins of the night!
A wicked rat her plaster stole,
Half eat, and dragged it to his hole.
The crystal eye, alas, was missed;
And puss had on her plumpers pissed.
A pigeon picked her issue-peas;
And Shock her tresses filled with fleas.

The nymph, tho' in this mangled plight,
Must ev'ry morn her limbs unite.
But how shall I describe her arts

To recollect the scattered parts?
Or shew the anguish, toil, and pain,
Of gath'ring up herself again?
The bashful muse will never bear
In such a scene to interfere.
Corinna in the morning dizen'd,
Who sees, will spew; who smells, be poison'd.