

ARCHANA NET JRF



www.archananetjrf.in



archana20387@gmail.com



+91 7903172730

VIRGINIA WOOLF



- ❖ Virginia Woolf was born in 1882 in London.
- ❖ She was not given a formal education
- ❖ Virginia's mother died when she was thirteen. This caused the first of several mental breakdowns
- ❖ Virginia Woolf started to work as a tutor at Morley College in 1904 and wrote reviews for some books.
- ❖ Her reviews were published in the "Times Literary Supplement".
- ❖ In 1905 she started meeting friends to discuss literary and artistic topics.
- ❖ Virginia Woolf also became a member of the People's Suffrage Federation and of the Women's Co-operative Guild. In 1912, Virginia married Leonard Woolf who was a writer.
- ❖ One year later, Virginia suffered a deep mental break down. Her husband helped her to live through it.

- ❖ Both Virginia and her husband were very interested in literature. Together they founded the Hogarth Press in 1917.
- ❖ In 1927 composed “To the Lighthouse”
- ❖ Virginia Woolf battled depression.
- ❖ On March 28, 1941 she committed suicide by drowning herself; she was tormented by sound of grenades of First World War. In her life she had published over 500 essays and about ten novels. Virginia Woolf did not use the traditional writing styles of her time. During her lifetime, Virginia had become a leader in the modernist literary movement.



Books written by Virginia Woolf

- *The Voyage Out* (1915)
- *Two Stories* (1917)
- *Kew Gardens* (1919)
- *Night and Day* (1919)
- *Monday or Tuesday* (1921)
- *Jacob's Room* (1922)
- *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown* (1923)
- *The Common Reader* (1925)
- *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925)
- *To the Lighthouse* (1927)
- *Orlando* (1928)
- *A Room of One's Own* (1929)
- *The Common Reader* (1932)
- *Flush* (1933)
- *The Years* (1937)
- *Three Guineas* (1938)
- *Roger Fry* (1940)
- *Between the Acts* (1941)
- *A Writer's Diary* (1953)
- *Moments of Being* (1976)

"The Angel of the House"



The "*Angel in the House*" is the title of a popular poem by Coventry Patmore, in which he holds his angel-wife up as a model for all women: devoted and submissive to her husband, passive and powerless, meek, charming, graceful, sympathetic, self-sacrificing, pious, and above all: pure.

Though not very popular when first published in 1854, it became increasingly influential through the nineteenth and twentieth century.

Initially this ideal expressed the values of the middle classes. However, with Queen Victoria's devoting herself to her husband Prince Albert and to a domestic life, the ideal spread throughout nineteenth century society.

For Virginia Woolf, the repressive ideal of women represented by the "*Angel in the House*" was still so potent that in "*Professions for Women*"(1931) she wrote: "*Killing the Angel in the House was part of the occupation of a woman writer.*"

Virginia Woolf tries to explain the reasons why there had been so few women writers up to then. According to her views, women lacked her own **space**, (a room of their own), **independence**, (five hundred pounds a year) and **tradition**, (a group of women writers who could be their models). Besides this, they needed to **get rid of the pressure of a patriarchal society**, which constantly declared that writing was an activity that had nothing to do with





VIRGINIA WOOLF
(ADELINA VIRGINIA STEPHENS)
(1882-1942)

BUT

She starts the essay with BUT, and affirms that she will be no offer the expected answer (and thus fulfil the first duty of a lecturer) rather expose her line of reasoning about the proposed topic. This BUT, together with her doubts about the meaning of the commissioned topic "*Women and Fiction*" cast a shadow over her authority as lecturer.

Later on she rejects the traditional "**I**" that represents the patriarchal discourse and she speaks through several personae: **Mary Beton**, **Mary Seton**, **Mary Hamilton** and **Mary Carmichael**, all of them fictitious.





In the first chapter she establishes her hypothesis about what women need to be able to write: **money and a room of their own**. But she also analyses the differences between male and female writing, among them the fact that men had university colleges and women were excluded from public places. She also points out the *"pervasiveness of women as the subjects of poetry and on their absence from history"* (Gardner 2000)

In chapter two she studies in detail the effect of poverty on the writing of fiction. She also exposes how men's anger against women (as a result of the new woman, the suffrage, etc.) affects their artistic production.





In **chapter three** she shows the contrast between the constant presence of women as characters in the fiction written by men and their exclusion as writers. To explain why women didn't have the access to the literary world, she introduces a fictional sister of Shakespeare and compares the difficulties met by both of them, equally gifted, when trying to be writers.

Judith and William represented the heads and tails of the coin.

"...any woman born with a great gift in the sixteenth century would certainly gone crazed, shot herself, or ended her days in some lonely cottage outside a village, half witch, half wizard, feared and mocked at." She concluded.

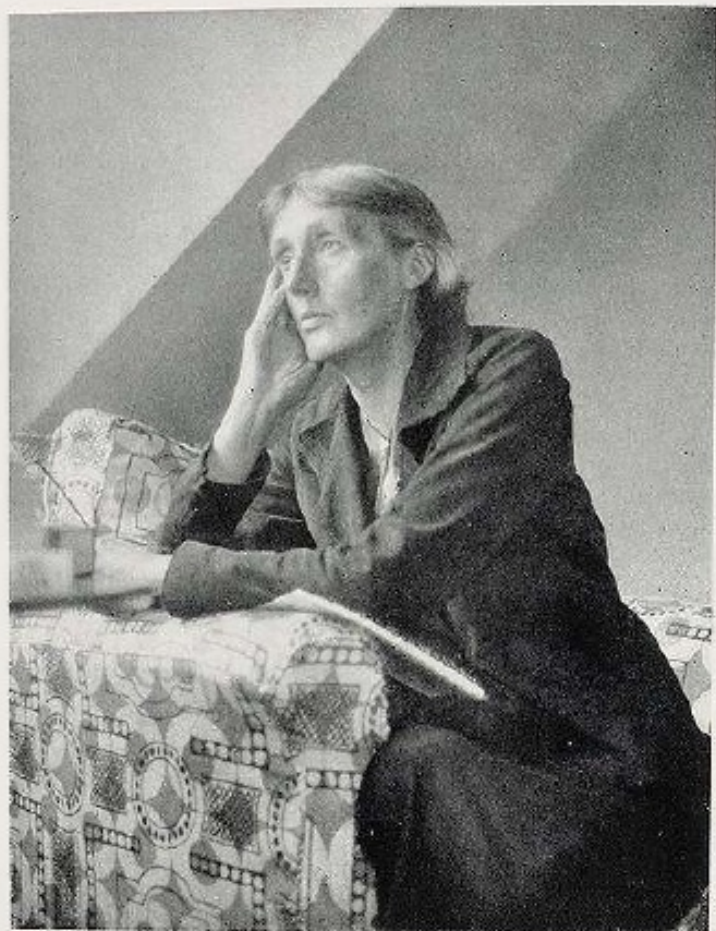




In chapter four she states the need of **tradition**, apart from **social recognition** and **material conditions**, to learn the craft and master it. She considers women lack the necessary background. She analyses the works of women writers such as Charlotte Brönte or Jane Austen and advices women to write **without anger**. She prefers Austen to Brönte because she was free from anger. She affirms that women prefer novel because it is a new genre, more suitable for them than the traditional genres used by men.

In **chapter five** she explores a language suitable for women. Mary Carmichael will have to find a language that has never been used before. Women mustn't write like men, neither in theme nor in form. **Time and experimentation** is needed as well as **tradition** and **reading** works written by other women. She exhorts women to "*think back through our mothers*" and to express experience "*as a woman*". "*A woman's writing is always feminine,...the only difficulty lies in defining what we mean by feminine.*"





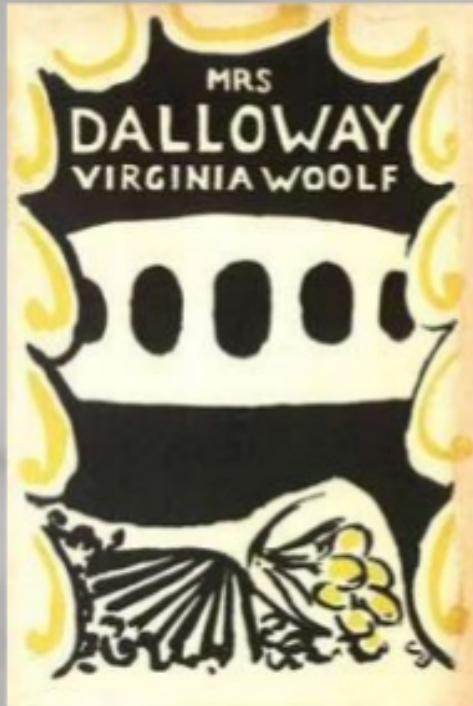
VIRGINIA WOOLF

In the last chapter, she introduces one of the most shocking ideas: the ideal state of mind to produce art is an androgynous one. She rejects determinism and she insists that men and women have a two faced mind, with a masculine and a feminine part, and both must be involved in the creative process if we want to create a lasting work of art.

Woolf tries to demonstrate through all the essay that **money** and **space** are intrinsically linked to fictional writing, and in the last chapter she quotes *The Art of Writing*, by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch in which the author demonstrates that poor poets don't have a dog's chance. Intellectual freedom depends on material things and poetry upon intellectual freedom. And women have always been poor and had no freedom at all.



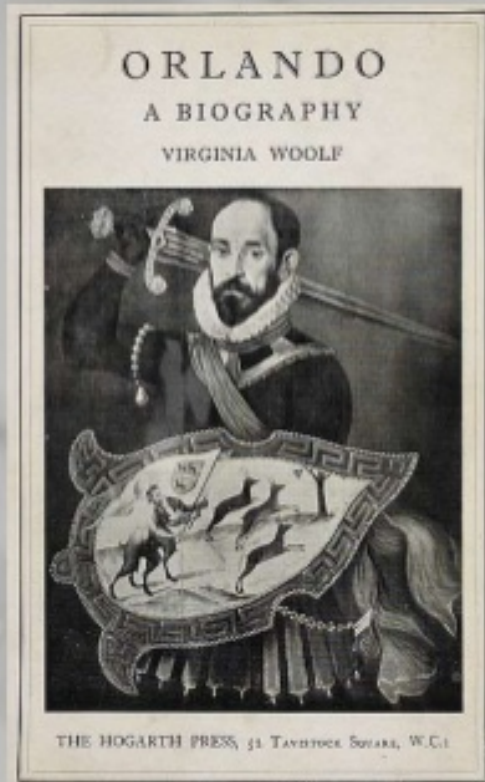
Famous books



Mrs Dalloway (1925)

- One of the most well known novels of Virginia Woolf.
- Describes a day of Mrs Dalloway in the World War 1.

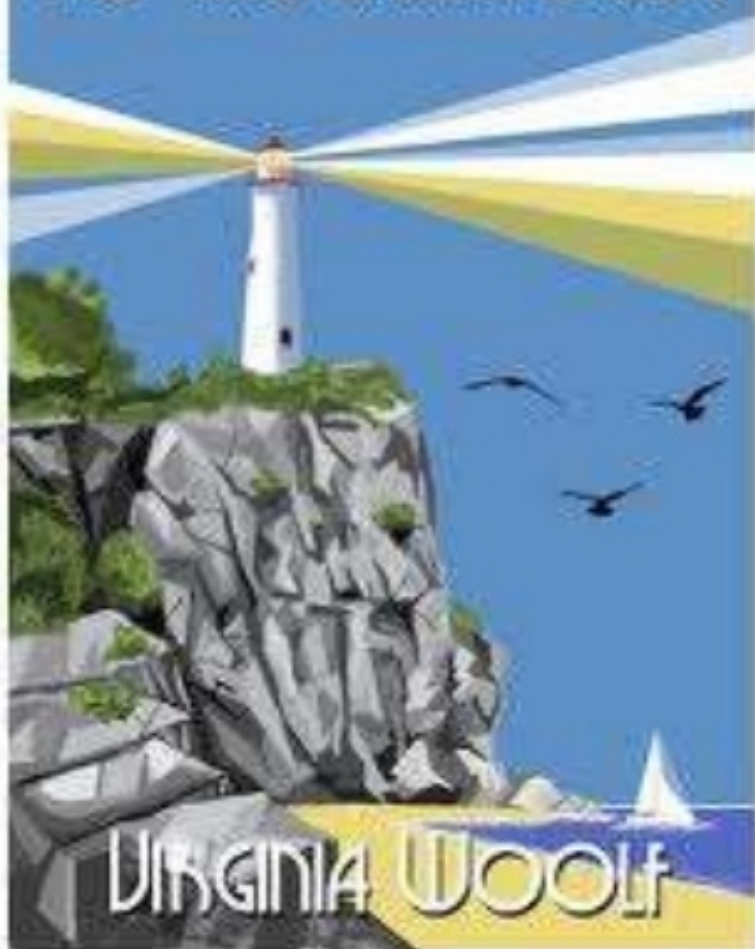
Famous books



Orlando (1928)

- A biography on Virginia Woolf's lover
- has been adapted for films and plays.

TO THE LIGHTHOUSE



VIRGINIA WOOLF

TO THE LIGHTHOUSE: PLOT

- × “To the lighthouse” does not have a traditional plot but consists of a series of experiences, memories, emotions and feelings explained by symbols. This novel is divided into three sections:
 1. The window, which takes place during a summer afternoon and evening in a summer home on the Isle of Skye in Hebrides;
 2. Time Passes, which covers about ten years;
 3. The Lighthouse, which lasts only one day.

A scenic view of a coastal town with terracotta roofs and a blue sea, framed by green shutters. The text "THE WINDOW" is centered over the image.

THE WINDOW

- ❖ Mr and Mrs Ramsay pass their holiday with their eight children: Cam, James, Prue, Andrew, Nancy Roger Rose Jasper, at the house by the sea. James, the younger son, wants desperately to go to the Lighthouse, but his father says that the next day it would be a storm.
- ❖ There are a lot of guests and Mrs Ramsay addresses them with respect and deference : the botanist William Bankes, the poet Augustus Carmichael, a philosopher Charles Tansley, the painter Lily Briscoe and two lovers Minta Doyle and Paul Rayley.

- ❖ That evening Ramsay family has a dinner party, and this is a perfect situation in which, each character thinks to his situation.
- ❖ After the dinner Mr Ramsay says “I love you” to his wife, but she isn't capable to answer him.

Time
Passes



In Time Passes
the children
grow up, war
broke out, Mrs
Ramsay dies
suddenly one
night. Her eldest
son, Andrew is
killed in battle by
a grenade, and
her daughter
Prue dies too
after only a year
of marriage.



The summerhouse
falls into a state of
decay for ten
years until the
family comes
back.

Mrs McNab, the
housekeeper,
tries to set the
house in order
before Lily
Briscoe returns.



The Lighthouse





In *The Lighthouse* Memory is the most important character. Mr Ramsay decides to go to the lighthouse with his two children James and Cam, and this experience is a moment of connection for them. Lily succeeds in finishing her painting, achieving her vision.



Lily
Briscoe

VS

Mrs
Ramsay



Mrs Ramsay

- Mrs Ramsay is a beautiful woman and a loving wife.
- She shows kindness and tolerance to her guests even if they do not appreciate her politeness.
- The image of Queen Victoria in relation to Mrs. Ramsay is recurrent and reflects the ideal domestic angel of the Victorian Age.
- Mrs. Ramsay plays this role of the ideal domesticated female very well, especially as hostess during a dinner party .



Lily Briscoe rejects the conventional image of the woman represented by Mrs Ramsay, but she is very shocked when Charles Transley supports the idea that women can neither paint or write. She doesn't want marry, but she manages to put into practice Mrs Ramsay teaching. Mrs Ramsay represents an example of life for her, so when she completes her painting she united with her



THEMES

The most important themes of this novel are:

- × **LOSS**: Minta loses her brooch on the beach, Ramsay family loses some of its members
- × **ART**: Also women can do Art
- × **TRANSIENCE**: Nothing lasts, but Mrs Ramsay doesn't want that her children grow up
- × **SEARCH**: For God and for the true meaning of life

The Use of Colours



- * WHITE: The absence of colours symbolizes the uncolourful meaning of science and abstract thought.
- * RED and BROWN: appear to be colours of egotism.
- * BLUE and GREEN: are the colours of impersonality
- * YELLOW: purity of everything and logical mental activity.



AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES



- *Her visits with her parents and family to St Ives, Cornwall, where her father rented a house, were perhaps the happiest times of Woolf's life, but when she was thirteen her mother died and, like Mrs Ramsay.*
- *Woolf's sister, Vanessa, wrote that reading the sections of the novel that describe Mrs Ramsay was like seeing her mother raised from the dead.*
- *Their brother Adrian was not allowed to go on an expedition to Godrevy Lighthouse, just as in the novel James looks forward to visiting the lighthouse and is disappointed when the trip is cancelled.*
- *Lily Briscoe's meditations on painting are a way for Woolf to explore her own creative process*

THE MODERN NOVEL

The modern novel is characterised by:

- ✓ The new concept of TIME: It was introduced by Bergson (who made the difference between historical and psychological time) and James. In this case time was not seen as a chronological order of events, because also our thoughts have illogical connections in the mind.
- The new theory of unconscious deriving from the Freudian influence: the novelist rejected omniscient narration. The analysis of character's inner was influenced by the simultaneous existence of different levels of consciousness and sub-consciousness.

A blue-toned background image of a clock face. The clock is viewed from a slightly elevated angle, showing the numbers and hands. A small bird is perched on the top hand, and another bird is visible on the bottom hand. The overall image has a soft, ethereal quality with a blue color palette.

STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

- ✓ The stream of consciousness technique or interior monologue was introduced to describe the flow of thoughts, sensations, memories in a flux of words, ideas and images similar to the mind's activity.
It's the attempt to describe the nature of mental life "from within"

Famous “Quotes”

- "Lock up your libraries if you like, but there is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind."
- "One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well."
- "You cannot find peace by avoiding life."
- "If you do not tell the truth about yourself you cannot tell it about other people."
- As a woman I have no country. As a woman my country is the whole world.

Her sad childhood and depression

- Due to her parents' divorce and re-marriage she had many siblings. She revealed that two of her step-brothers sexually abused her and her younger sister. It led to a lifelong depression and she suffered from that throughout her life. It is thought that her memory from her dark childhood affected her writing in the future.
- She also had a profound interest in woman's rights and power.