BEGC-134
Reading the Novel
Assignment July, 2026 Session
(Based on Blocks 1 - 4)

TMA 01/2026 - 26
Max. Marks: 100

Answer all questions.

Section A

1. Answer the following in about 200 words each. **(2 × 10 = 20)**

(i) Discuss the distinguishing features of the novel as a literary form. How does it differ from the epic and the romance?

(ii) What is meant by point of view in a novel? Explain its significance with suitable illustrations.

Section B

Answer the following in about 350 words each. **(4 × 15 = 60)**

1. Discuss Edna Pontellier's search for identity and personal freedom in *The Awakening*. How does Kate Chopin challenge conventional ideas of womanhood?

2. Analyse the relationship between tribal life, nature, and exploitation in Paraja. How does Gopinath Mohanty portray the conflict between indigenous traditions and external forces?

3. Examine the significance of Okonkwo as a tragic hero in Things Fall Apart. Discuss how his strengths also contribute to his downfall.

4. Compare the representation of society and individual freedom in The Awakening and Things Fall Apart.

Section C

Answer the following in about 600 words. **(1 × 20 = 20)**

5. Critically examine the novel as a medium for representing social change. Discuss your answer with reference to *The Awakening*, *Paraja,* and *Things Fall Apart*.

1. Answer the following in about 200 words each. (2 × 10 = 20)
(i) Discuss the distinguishing features of the novel as a literary form. How does it differ from the epic and the romance?

Answer

The novel is a long work of prose fiction that presents human experiences through characters, events, settings and relationships. Unlike a simple story that depends mainly on one incident, a novel usually develops an imagined world in which people act, change and face the consequences of their choices. It became especially important with the growth of print culture, literacy and an interest in everyday life. Although novels differ greatly in length and subject, some common features distinguish the form.

One major feature is its attention to individual characters. A novelist may show not only what a person does but also what that person thinks, fears or desires. In *The Awakening*, for example, readers follow Edna Pontellier's private dissatisfaction as closely as her outward actions. A second feature is a developed plot. The story may contain a central conflict and several related episodes; events generally gain significance through their effects on the characters. The movement from Sukru Jani's ordinary family life to debt and dispossession in *Paraja* illustrates this connection.

The novel also gives importance to social and historical settings. Work, marriage, class, religion, property and community customs can shape the lives of fictional people. In *Things Fall Apart*, the everyday practices of an Igbo village are essential to understanding Okonkwo. Realistic detail helps readers recognise the pressures of an actual society even when the characters are invented. Novels can use different narrators, points of view, dialogue, descriptions, symbolism and changes of time to produce this sense of life. They need not always be realistic: there are also fantastic, historical, psychological, experimental and satirical novels.

The epic differs chiefly in its scale, style and traditional purpose. Classical epics are generally extended narratives in verse, although the term is sometimes used more broadly. They celebrate great heroes and momentous events that concern an entire people, often bringing gods, supernatural powers or a heroic past into the action. An epic hero may represent an ideal of collective courage or honour. A novel can also address a whole community, but it often explores ordinary lives, mixed motives and personal doubts. Its flexible prose style allows everyday conversation and contradictory perspectives instead of a consistently elevated heroic manner.