BEGM-163

The Novel: An Introduction

Assignment July 2026 & January 2027

(Based on Blocks 1 - 4)

TMA 01/2026 - 27

Max. Marks: 100

Answer all questions.

Section A

1. **Write short notes in about 100 words each:** **4 × 5 = 20**

(a) Plot
(b) Types of Characters
(c) Form and Content
(d) First person narrative

Section B

Answer the following in about 350 words each: **4 X 20 = 80**

1. How is character different from characterisation? Explain with reference to the characterisation of Edna Pontellier in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*.

2. Bring out the importance of the songs and the use of colloquial language in *Paraja.*

3. "That man was one of the greatest men in Imuofia." To what extent would you agree with this statement in *Things Fall Apart*?

4. What do you understand by the Biographical Approach to a Novel? Explain with examples.

1. Write short notes in about 100 words each: 4 × 5 = 20

(a) Plot

Answer

Plot is the organised pattern of events in a story, especially the way one event leads to another. It is not simply the order in which things happen. A list such as “a family borrows money, loses its land and struggles to survive” gives a summary of events; a plot explains the decisions, conflicts and consequences that connect them. The novelist selects and arranges incidents to create curiosity, meaning and emotional effect. Plot therefore provides movement and a sense of direction to the narrative.

A familiar way of describing a plot begins with exposition, which introduces the setting, important characters and basic situation. Rising action brings complications and intensifies the central conflict. A climax marks a decisive change, after which the consequences become clearer and some form of resolution or ending follows. These stages are useful for analysis, but not every novel follows them in a simple order. Modern novels may begin in the middle, move backwards in time, present parallel stories or leave conflicts unresolved.

Conflict often gives a plot its energy. It may occur between people, within a person, between an individual and society, or against larger political and economic forces. In Things Fall Apart, Okonkwo’s personal fear of weakness operates alongside colonial disruption and disagreements inside Igbo society. In Paraja, a family’s effort to protect its livelihood is gradually trapped by an unfair system of debt and authority. Such connections turn isolated incidents into a meaningful whole.

Plot should also be distinguished from story: story is what happens in a broadly chronological sense, while plot is how the writer presents and connects those happenings. Suspense, foreshadowing, flashback, pacing and changes in point of view all shape the reader’s experience. A good plot does more than entertain; it makes readers consider why characters act as they do and what their actions reveal about life.



A common progression of plot stages, not a rule followed by every novel.