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**SUBJECT**

**: ENGLISH**

**CLASS**

**: B.A.**

**YEAR**

**: 1<sup>st</sup> YEAR**

**NAME OF THE PAPER**

**: ENGLISH POETRY**

**TOPIC**

**: SHAKESPEARE'S SONNET  
NO. 116**

**KEYWORDS**

**: TRUE LOVE, OBSTACLES  
CONSTANCY, POLAR  
STAR**




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# INTRODUCTION

- ❖ ***William Shakespeare (1564-1616)*** was born on April 23 , 1564 at Stratford –on –Avon in Warwickshire, Shakespeare was the son of a tradesman who a little later became its High Bailiff.
  - ❖ He attended the local Grammar School where he learnt ‘small Latin and less Greek.’ At the age of 19 he was hastily married to Anne Hathaway who was eight year older. This ill-advised marriage appears to have been unhappy.
  - ❖ It is said that for fear of punishment for stealing deer from the woods of ***Sir Thomas Lucy***, he left his native town and went to London in 1587. Little is known about his life in London. By 1592 he became well-known as a playwright.
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- ❖ He remained in London for more than 20 years. His fame and fortunes grew steadily and he became a shareholder in the famous Globe Theatre. He wrote 37 plays which have made him the greatest dramatist of the world.
- ❖ Shakespeare is considered the greatest dramatic genius that the world has produced. According to Dryden ‘ of all poets ancient and modern he has the widest and the most comprehensive soul.



# *His Sonnets*

- ❖ His sonnets, which were composed during the last decade of 16<sup>th</sup> century, were published in 1609. These 154 sonnets are the only direct expression of Shakespeare's own feelings. His sonnets are the best of his poetic art. They have the richest poetry in them. Grace and Euphony are their most characteristic qualities. They are masterly in the expression of the poet's mood and they also very beautifully reveal the depth and the intensity of poet's feelings.
- ❖ His first 126 sonnets are addressed to a man and the remaining to a dark lady. Though the autobiographical element in the sonnets is unmistakable.





❖ His sonnets are concerned with basic themes of poetry- Love, Friendship and Time. His sonnets are of the 'English' form which is now generally called Shakespearean. They are built up of three quatrains and a final rhyming couplet . He did not follow the Italian division of octave and sestet. In spite of occasional weaknesses his sonnets are remarkable for their subtle thought and exquisite expression. Regarded as poems the sonnets are at the height of their kind.



# *THEMES AND SUBSTANCE OF THE SONNET NO. 116*

- ❖ *'Let me not the Marriage of True Minds'* sonnet number **116** is one of the loveliest of *Shakespeare's* 154 sonnets. It is addressed to William Herbert the Earl of Southampton—both of them are his friends.
- ❖ The sonnet seeks to bring out the true essence of love. Its theme is love. True love is different from artificial love which changes with the passage of time. True love is as constant as the sun. It is beyond the influence of time.



- ❖ In this sonnet poet is not willing to accept any arguments against the fixity or constancy of Love. True love is the union of two minds or souls. It is true that the course of true love does never run smooth. It Faces odds and obstacles.
- ❖ True Love does not yield or submit to them. It resists all pressure and persuasion. No remover can remove love or force can change it. It is not a slave to situations or circumstances. It does not bow to pressure. True love is like a lighthouse it guides the boats wandering on seas or ships that have lost their bearing in the storms.



- ❖ True love is like the Polar Star which helps the sailor discover their direction. Its height and value can not be exactly measured. But its value is beyond doubt. Its significance is great.
- ❖ Love is not a clown or jester in the court of the Kind Time. It will not change itself to suit the mood of the master Time. It will not change itself to suit the mood of the master Time. Love is not a time server. Time has little impact on true love. It triumphs over the ravages of Time. It lasts the world lasts.
- ❖ This sonnet appeals to the readers as Shakespeare's most touching one.



# *IMPORTANT QUESTIONS*

## *Question 1.*

- ❖ What are the salient features of Shakespeare's sonnet ?

## *Question 2.*

- ❖ How does William Shakespeare define to True Love?

## *Question 3.*

- ❖ In concluding couplet of the sonnet what does poet want to say ?



# ***DECLARATION***

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