

Functions of Literature

Hendreich Steve P. Olitoquit

Literature Defined

- Literature is the art of written works.
- Published writings in a particular style on a particular subject
- Any art form that uses language in either written or spoken form.
- Literature is often accompanied by the other art forms (music, theater arts, film making etc) in varying degrees and combinations to suit the preferences of a particular audience group.

Functions of Literature

What does literature do?

Entertainment Function

- Known as “pleasure reading”. In this function, literature is used to entertain its readers. Literary works are consumed for the sake of one’s enjoyment.

Social and Political Function

- Literature shows how society works around them.

Literature helps the reader “see” the social and political constructs around him/her and shows the state of the people and the world around him/her.

Ideological Function

- Literature shapes our way of thinking based on the ideas of other people. Literature also displays a person's ideology placed in the text consciously and unconsciously.

Moral Function

- Literature may impart moral values to its readers. The morals contained in a literary text, whether good or bad, are absorbed by whoever reads it, thus helps in shaping their personality.

Linguistic Function

- Literature preserves the language of every civilization from where it originated. They are also evidences that a certain civilization has existed by recording the language and preserving it through wide spans of time.

Cultural Function

- Literature orients us to the traditions, folklore and the arts of our ethnic group's heritage. Literature preserves entire cultures and creates an imprint of the people's way of living for others to read, hear, and learn.

Educational Function

- Literature teaches us of many things about the human experience. Literature is used to portray the facets of life that we see, and those that we would never dream of seeing. Literature, therefore, is a conduit for the chance to experience and feel things where we can learn things about life.

Historical Function

- Ancient texts, illuminated scripts, stone tablets etc. keep a record of events that happened in the place where they originate. Thus they serve as time capsules of letters that is studied by scholars and researchers of today.