

Thomas Gray

1. What do you know about Gray's studies and journey?

Gray studied in Cambridge University. He made a grand tour of France and Italy between 1739 and 1741 and several tours of the Lake District and Scotland.

2. When was the *Elegy* composed?

The *Elegy* was composed in 1750.

3. What are its central characters?

Its central characters are poor and oppressed people of rural England.

4. What is the setting like?

The setting is like rural England.

5. What is the poet/speaker's attitude to it?

The poet/speaker's attitude is sympathetic to the lives of the poor and regards the great of the world as proud, boastful and pompous.

6. Which adjectives best describe the tone?

The adjectives best describe the tone are reflective and melancholy mood.

7. In what way is the *Elegy* different from 18th-century poetry?

The *Elegy* is different from 18th-century poetry for:

- its realistic setting in the contemporary English countryside;
- its lyricism;
- its characters are poor and oppressed people of rural England.

The historical and literary background to *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*.

The Bill of Rights limited the power of monarchy in favour of the Parliament.

The Act of union united the Scottish and English Parliament.

In 1714 the English throne passed into the hands of German house of Hanover.

In the 18th century the figure of the Prime Minister came foreground and the party system began develop.

The period from 1688 to 1775 saw a great development of Britain's colonial expansion.

The ideals of French Revolution inspired British radicals' demands for social and political reforms.

The aim of 18th-century literature was to amuse and instruct.

The most popular form was satire both in poetry and prose.

The century saw the rise of new genre, fiction, which enjoyed great popularity.

Poetry aimed at classic perfection and followed strict rules of metre and rhyme.

The language of poetry was poetic diction, which was removed from ordinary language.

Drama first went into decline and then revived in a new form of the Comedy of Manners.

A new movement, Romanticism, emerged at the end of the 18th century.

Romantic poetry gave importance to imagination over reason and the relationship of man with nature.

An informal language was introduced for poetry.

Romantic plays were more intended for reading than performing.