



The Augustan Age



A golden age (page 77)

The 18th-century in England was called “**Augustan**” after the period in Roman history known for its political stability and flourishing of the arts.

The 18th-century **key concepts** were:

- political stability (but corruption and bribery were common in politics);
- materialism and economic progress;
- individualism;
- liberal thought and free will;
- optimism;
- Reason and common sense;
- desire for balance, symmetry, refinement.

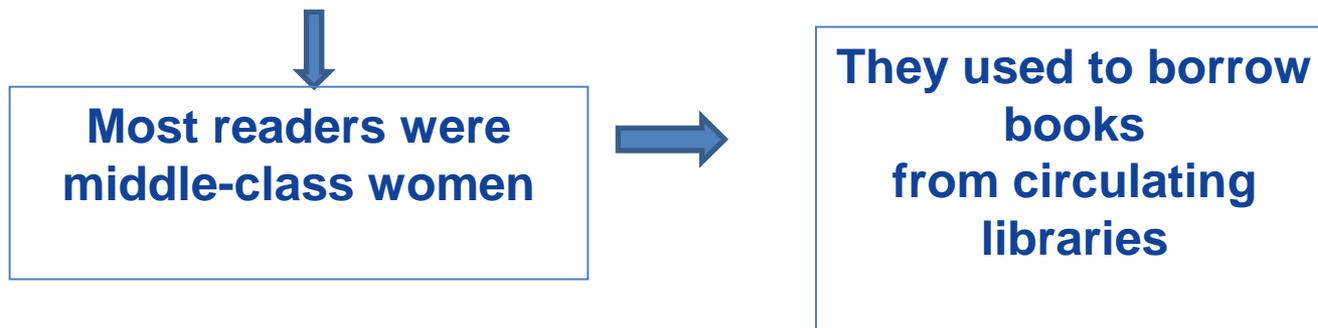


The birth of newspapers (page 80)

- The Enlightenment and the affirmation of rationalistic ideas brought about the need for a **new circulation of ideas**.
- ↓
- Different journals and pamphlets began to be published in the 17th century, but modern periodicals began in the 18th century (*The review* by Defoe, *The Tatler* by Steele and *The Spectator* by Addison).
 - These **newspapers** talked about politics, religion, trade, manners and morals.
 - Politicians didn't like them, because they spread new ideas to the masses. So they imposed some limitations on them: they had to be printed on a special paper with a stamp, which was extremely expensive.
 - So newspapers used **advertisement** as a means to survive.



- Another important means for the circulation of ideas were **coffee houses**:
 1. They were attended by fashionable and artistic people;
 2. They became gathering points where people exchanged ideas and gossip;
 3. They let public opinion and journalism evolve;
 4. They were exclusively attended by men.
- **The reading public increased** in the Augustan age





The reading public

The interest of middle-class people in literature gave rise to

journalism

‘The Tatler’ and ‘The Spectator’ → the first English newspapers
Their style → simple, lively
Their aim → didactic

the novel

expressed the belief in the power of reason and the individual’s trust in his own abilities

They were written in a simple way because they were addressed to the middle classes, to practical-minded tradesmen.

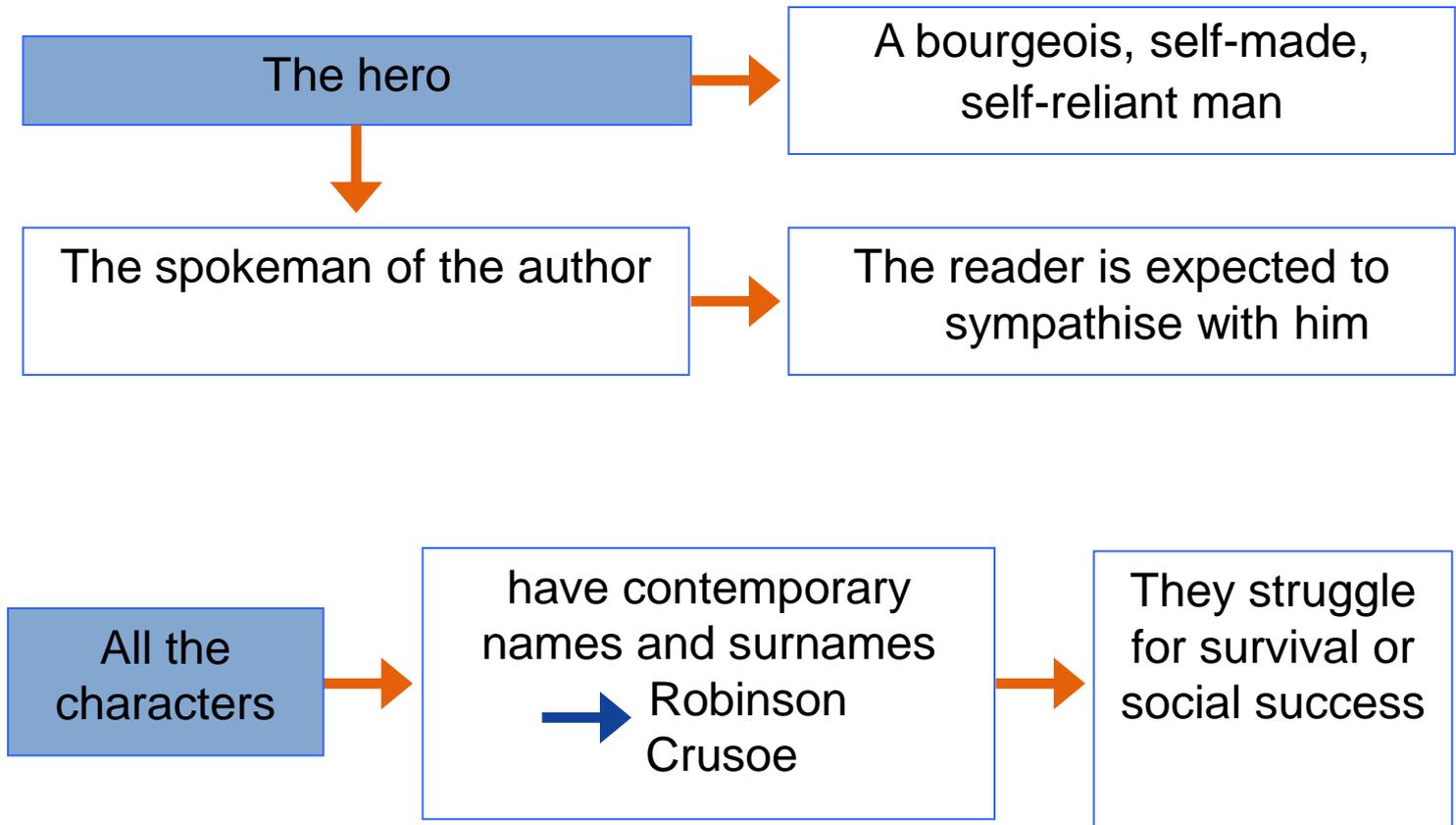


The novel (page 81)

1. Novelists were the spokesmen of the middle class.
2. The fathers of the English novel:
 - **Daniel Defoe** → *the realistic novel*
 - **Jonathan Swift** → *the satirical novel*



The characters





The setting

- Chronological sequence of events.
- 1st or 3rd person narrator.
- Time: references to particular times of the year or of the day.

'I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York'



Robinson Crusoe

- Place: specific references to names of countries, towns and streets.
- Detailed descriptions of interiors → to make the narrative more realistic.
- Simple, factual language.



Themes

1. **Real life**
2. **Everything that could alter a social status.**
3. **The sense of reward and punishment**
→ linked to the Puritan ethics of the middle class.