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Contribution to English Nearly everyone knows that countries such as the United Kingdom , the United States of America , Canada , Australia , and New Zealand are primarily English-speaking countries ; that is , English is the mother tongue used in these countries. What is less well known is that English is also the mother tongue in countries such as the Republic of Ireland (officially called Eire) , Barbados , Jamaica , Trinidad , and Guyana. Among these latter few , the Irish have made contributions to the English language in both its lexicon and literature which can be considered second to none. Virtually every aspect of English literature has been graced by the writings of the Irish. This fact is all the more amazing because Ireland is a relatively small country , with never more than four million people throughout its long history. Yet many great "English" writers were indeed born and often raised in Ireland , though many , too , immigrated to the United Kingdom at some point in their lives. Among these pillars of English literature were Jonathan Swift , William Butler Yeats , James Joyce , Samuel Beckett , Oscar Wilde , George Bernard Shaw , and Edmund Burke. Many other lesser-known figures have punctuated English literature as well. These mens contributions to the English language and to Western thought in general are immeasurable. A review of two of these writers major works will reveal why. Jonathan Swift

(1667 -1745) by most reckoning is the best English-language satirist ever , and one of the worlds greatest as well. Born in Ireland of English parents , Swift went to school there through his bachelors degree (Trinity College , Dublin , capital of Ireland) 。 Thereafter he frequently Traveled between England and Ireland , including years spent at Oxford College , where he earned his masters degree. Swift wrote a great deal of poetry , but he is best regarded as a prose satirist. He wrote prolifically both in Ireland and England , nearly constantly shuttling from one to the other. In Ireland he worked on Gullivers Travels , which he later had published in England in 1726. Already famous by that time , Swift would become immortalized with this last great work. What child does not know the story of the brave sailor Gulliver as he travels through lands in which he is at turn both a giant and a midget ? Yet most readers are not aware of Swifts intent to satirize the political , academic , and religious leaders of his time. Read either way , Swifts genius as a writer of English cannot be denied. A giant of English Theater was George Bernard Shaw (1856 - 1950) . Born in Dublin , Shaw moved to England with his family when he was 20 and stayed there for most of the rest of his long life. His early fiction writing was so poor that he could not find a publisher. Only when he began to work as a playwright did his fortunes improve. Among the many , many plays for which Shaw is famous , perhaps his most lasting (though not his most critically acclaimed) is Pygmalion (1916) , the story of a language teacher who attempts to " civilize" a young prostitute by training her to speak correctly. If this story

sounds familiar , it should : Pygmalion was later filmed winning on Oscar for Shaw and later again transformed into the highly popular Broadway musical My Fair Lady (1956) 。 A good story never dies : the original Pygmalion has since been updated in the hit movie Pretty woman (1990) starring Richard Gere and Julia Roberts. As with Shakespeare , many of Shaws plays are continually restaged or rewritten into new media because Shaw wrote on many themes which touch on the human condition , independent of time and space. Among the constellation of Irish talents , perhaps Swift and Shaw are two among the more brilliant stars , but much more could be written of those mentioned above and many others.

Though English literature written by the British suffices as an eternal and shining canon of literature , it would be nonetheless dimmer without the considerable talents of its Irish contributors. 100Test 下载频道开通 , 各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 www.100test.com