

Swami and Friends
R.K Narayan 2nd Sem

R.K Narayan : R.K Narayan was born on 10 October 1906. He was an Indian writer. He was a leading author of early Indian literature in English along with Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao.

Swami and Friends is the first of a trilogy of novels written by R.K. Narayan. The novel, the first book Narayan wrote, is set in British India in a fictional town called Malgudi. The second and third books in the trilogy are, 'The Bachelor of Arts' and 'The English Teacher'.

Characters :

- 1) Swaminathan

- 2) Swami's Father

- 3) Swami's Mother

- 4) Swami's Grandmother

- 5) Swami's Little Brother

- 6) Somu

- 7) Shankar

- 8) Rajam

- 9) Mani

- 10) Samuel.

Malgudi : Malgudi is a fictional town located in South India in the novels and short stories of R.K. Narayan. It forms the setting for most of R.K. Narayan's works. Starting with his first novel, 'Swami and Friends' (1935), all but one of his fifteen novels and most of his short stories take place here. Malgudi was a portmanteau of two Bangalore localities - Malleshwaram and

Basavanagudi.

Narayan has successfully portrayed Malgudi as a microcosm of India.

Malgudi is located on the banks of the river Savayy. In 'Swami and Friends', Swami, Mami and Rajam spend most of their evenings playing or chatting by the river.

'Swami' in 'Swami and Friends' - In 'Swami and Friends' Swami is a 10 year-old boy. He is an unconstrained, indiscreet, wicked but then also an exceptionally honest child. His ~~char~~ character is a kid in the fullest feeling of the world. How he grows up, his ~~misde~~ mischiefs which made his family irritated, his wonder, growing pains and innocence and many aspects are being portrayed in the novel. He lives in a universe of bossy grown-ups. He is a student at Albert Mission School. It is a British established school where importance is given to Christianity and English education.

Theme:

i) Diversity and Love: Friendship is the main theme of 'Swami and Friends'. Here we find the sweet and strong bond of friendship despite their various ethnic backgrounds, their various castes, their various desires for vacation, their various perspectives on life itself. They support one another by providing each other company and diversity, not by actually fixing problems or getting what they want.

ii) Competition: Here we find another mode of social order, that is competition. This competitions are shown in the novel between certain personalities, but also in the symbol of cricket. When Swami can't make it to practices or competitions because of school, we see the unfortunate side of competition. Rajam puts pressure on him to skip school because Rajam is only thinking about his own personal victory. This is the opposite of community.

iii) Adventure and Time: Here we find that the adventures of Swami's life unfold over periods of time, this adventure can sometimes be ecstatic and full of love and joy, but there are also times like when Swami gets lost. It takes time to solve the problems Swami faces on his adventure, so in addition to the challenge of succeeding, there is another unspoken challenge upon Swami to stay enlightened by being patient when he is suffering.