

## **Explication de texte (French Commentary)**

Guidelines for FR109  
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I. Exposition (10%) Choose one or two of the following bits of info:

1. Who is the author?
2. Give a little information about the text (when was it written or why?)
3. What genre is this?
4. Situate the passage within the larger text.
5. Give us some background on the scene.

II. Development (70%)

What is the **question/problem** you are exploring?

Looking at the mechanics of the passage, how does it work **to express the theme**? Choose the criterion that seems to be the most important to the functioning of the text. Explain why you chose this criterion. Your question is your thesis. It is NOT a conclusion, but what is at stake in your discussion.

\*Don't focus on **WHAT** the author is saying, explain HOW and WHY (s)he is saying it.

Possible Criteria (choose just one for a short commentary):

1. Action

- a. are there multiple episodes in the passage?
- b. how are they connected?
- c. is this a self-contained set of actions or connected to others?

2. Characters

- a. how are the characters described?
- b. are they in conflict with one another and how?
- c. Are they believable?

3. Style

- a. Are there different registers being used?
- b. What is the register (epic, familiar, poetic, tragic, comic)?
- c. how does the style support or set in motion the action?

4. Structure

- a. How is the passage divided? (actions? Style? Characters?)
- b. relationship between different phenomena  
- do they work together or are they in opposition? Does this create irony?

III. Closure. (20%)

What can this close reading bring us to understand that a simple summary or paraphrase would not have been able to do?

## In-class exercises:

### SEMINAR GROUP I

1. [Lewis, Libby, Yomna, Tamsin] How does Flaubert use stylistic devices to portray the conflict of repressed desire and internal/external awareness? (pp 136-139)
2. [Shaf, Rachel C., Adam E, Eddie C] How do structure and style express aspects of passion and its relationship with societal convention? (pp.132- 134)
3. [Giles, Lakshmi, Lucy, Jay] How does the theme of being isolated from society structure the passage? (pp.134-136)

### SEMINAR GROUP II

1. (pp. 132 – 134) How the characters' speech and actions used to create a hierarchal structure between themselves? [Tabitha, Lilia, Joshua, Charlotte]
2. (pp 134 – 136) How does Flaubert use character and setting to both immerse and alienate the reader and how does this show a parallel to Emma's relationship with this society? [Maud, Erin, Hazel]
3. (pp 136-139) How does Flaubert's style illustrate tension/conflict between the social classes of his time? [Richard, Bertille, Rachel P., Alice, Anna]