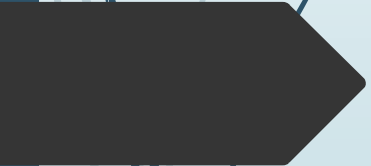


BA PART II PAPER-IV

ELEMENTS OF NOVEL- EMMA



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Analysis And Interpretation

- ▶ Marriage and social status are the two foci of *Emma*. Most of the drama in Austen's novel revolves around who loves whom and what that means, given their social station. Social status in 19th-century England was determined by a confluence of factors, including, but not limited to, family name, sex, birthright, reputation, and wealth, and it dictated much about the course of a person's life. Members of the higher social classes were not expected to intermarry, let alone interact, with members of a lower class.
- ▶ Austen subtly satirizes her society's obsession with social distinctions.
- ▶ Emma finally begins to realize that social distinction does not equate to a constitutional difference in character.

ELEMENTS OF NOVEL

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THE NOVEL: SOME ELEMENTS

Elements in nearly all novels:

CHARACTER	direct description or commentary by the narrator, including ironic comment language: in speech and thought, in both content and form of expression action: especially as it confirms or contradicts what characters say change: growth or deterioration †
Coincidence	Coincidence, which surprises us in real life with symmetries we don't expect to find there, is all too obviously a structural device in fiction, and an excessive reliance on it can jeopardize the verisimilitude of a narrative. †
Ending	last-minute twist is generally more typical of the short story than of the novel †
Intertextuality	some ways a text can refer to another: parody, pastiche, echo, allusion, direct quotation, structural parallelism †
IRONY	consists of saying the opposite of what you mean, or inviting an interpretation different from the surface meaning of your words. †
Narrative Structure	you can't see it, but it determines the edifice's shape and character † the arrangement of the parts of the material
PLOT	Plot has been defined as "a completed process of change." † A story is "a narrative of events in their time-sequence. A plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality." --Forster
POINT OF VIEW	the vantage point from which an author tells a story. The two broad categories are (1) the third-person narrator who tells the story and does not participate in the action and (2) the first-person narrator who is a major or minor participant.
Repetition	can be lexical or grammatical; incantatory rhythms and repetitions †
SETTING	the background of a story in [1] PLACE, including city/country/region, indoors or out, weather and [2] TIME, including century, year, historical and social conditions, season, day/night, and the like
Showing and Telling	Fictional discourse constantly alternates between <i>showing</i> us what happened and <i>telling</i> us what happened. [Scene and Narration] †
STYLE	the individual way a writer works, especially to achieve a specific effect. The elements of style include diction, syntax, imagery, figurative language, and larger questions of structure, modes of discourse, and the like.
SYMBOL	anything that "stand for" something else is a symbol, but the process operates in many different ways. †
THEME	a central idea. Like <i>thesis</i> , it implies a subject and a predicate of some kind, as opposed to a <i>topic</i> , which can be simply a label
TONE	the author's attitude toward the material in a work or toward the reader. Tone is revealed by style.

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Elements in many novels

Comedy	Two primary sources: situation and style. Both depend crucially upon timing †
Duration	as measured by comparing the time events would have taken up in reality with the time taken to read about them. This factor affects narrative tempo †
Epiphany	literally, a showing. Any descriptive passage in which external reality is charged with a kind of transcendental significance for the perceiver †
Epistolary Novel	advantages: can have more than one correspondent and thus show the same event from different points of view †
Exotic	foreign, but not necessarily glamorous or alluring †
Implication	especially sexual in Victorian lit †
Interior Monologue	very difficult technique to use... apt to impose a painfully slow pace on the narrative †
Intrusive Author	around the turn of the century fell into disfavour †
Magic Realism	marvellous and impossible events occur in what otherwise purports to be a realistic narrative †
Metafiction	fiction about fiction novels and stories that call attention to their own compositional procedures. †
Names	In a novel names are never neutral. †
Sense of Past	"historical novels (19th century) dealt with historical personages and events; but also evoked the past in terms of culture, ideology, manners and morals †
Stream of Consciousness	1] one technique is interior monologue 2] second technique is free indirect style. It renders thought as reported speech but keeps the kind of vocabulary that is appropriate to the character, and deletes some of the tags †
Allegory	does not merely suggest, but insists on being decoded in terms of another meaning; at every point a one-to-one correspondence to the implied meaning †
Time-Shift	narrative avoids presenting life [in order] and allows us to make connections of causality and irony between widely separated events †
Title	The title is part of the text--the first part of it, in fact †
Unreliable Narrator	invariably invented characters who are part of the stories they tell †

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THEMES

- ❑ *Marriage and Social Status*
- *Emma* is structured around a number of marriages recently consummated or anticipated, and, in each case, the match solidifies the participant's social status. In Austen's time, social status was determined by a combination of family background, reputation, and wealth—marriage was one of the main ways in which one could raise one's social status. This method of social advancement was especially crucial to women, who were denied the possibility of improving their status through hard work or personal achievement.
- ❑ **The Obstacles to Open Expression**
- The misunderstandings that permeate the novel are created, in part, by the conventions of social propriety. To differing degrees, characters are unable to express their feelings directly and openly, and their feelings are therefore mistaken. While the novel by no means suggests that the manners and rituals of social interaction should be eliminated, Austen implies that the overly clever, complex speech of Mr. Elton, Frank Churchill, and Emma deserves censure. She presents Mr. Martin's natural, warm, and direct manner of expressing himself as preferable to Mr. Elton's ostentatious and insincere style of complimenting people.

THEMES

❑ **The Confined Nature of Women's Existence**

- ▶ The novel's limited, almost claustrophobic scope of action gives us a strong sense of the confined nature of a woman's existence in early-nineteenth-century rural England. Emma possesses a great deal of intelligence and energy, but the best use she can make of these is to attempt to guide the marital destinies of her friends, a project that gets her into trouble. The alternative pastimes depicted in the book—social visits, charity visits, music, artistic endeavors—seem relatively trivial, at times even monotonous. Isabella is the only mother focused on in the story, and her portrayal suggests that a mother's life offers a woman little use of her intellect.

❑ **The Blinding Power of Imagination**

- ▶ The novel offers sharply critical illustrations of the ways in which personal biases or desires blind objective judgment. Emma cannot understand the motives that guide Mr. Elton's behavior because she imagines that he is in love with Harriet

SYMBOLS

❑ The Riddle

- ▶ Also known as charades, riddles in the novel take the form of elaborate wordplay. They symbolize the pervasive subtexts that wait to be decoded in characters' larger social interactions. In Chapter 9, Mr. Elton presents a riddle to Emma and Harriet. Emma decodes it immediately, as "courtship," but she decodes it wrongly in the sense that she believes it is meant for Harriet rather than herself. This wordplay also makes an appearance during the Box Hill party, when Mr. Weston makes an acrostic for Emma.

❑ The Word Game

- ▶ Similar to the riddle, a word game is played in Chapter 41 between Emma, Frank, and Jane. It functions as a metaphor for the partial understandings and misunderstandings that exist among Emma, Frank, Jane, and Mr. Knightley. As Mr. Knightley looks on, Frank uses child's blocks to create words for the ladies to decode.

❑ Tokens of Affection

- ▶ A number of objects in the novel take on symbolic significance as tokens of affection. Mr. Elton frames Emma's portrait of Harriet as a symbol of affection for her, though Emma misunderstands it as a symbol of affection for Harriet.

MOTIFS

❑ Visits

- The main events of the novel take place during visits that the characters pay to each other. The frequency and length of visits between characters indicates the level of intimacy and attachment between them. Frank's frequent visits to Hartfield show his relationship with Emma to be close, though in hindsight we recognize that Frank also continually finds excuses to visit Jane.

❑ Parties

- More formal than visits, parties are organized around social conventions more than around individual attachments—Emma's hosting a dinner party for Mrs. Elton, a woman she dislikes, exemplifies this characteristic. There are six important parties in the novel: the Christmas Eve party at Randalls, the dinner party at the Coles', the dinner party given for Mrs. Elton, the dance at the Crown Inn, the morning party at Donwell Abbey, and the picnic at Box Hill. Each occasion provides the opportunity for social intrigue and misunderstandings, and for vanities to be satisfied and connections formed. Parties also give characters the chance to observe other people's interactions

MOTIFS

► **Conversational Subtexts**

- Much of the dialogue in *Emma* has double or even triple meanings, with different characters interpreting a single comment in different ways. Sometimes these double meanings are apparent to individual characters, and sometimes they are apparent only to the alert reader. For example, when Mr. Elton says of Emma's portrait of Harriet,

“I cannot keep my eyes from it,” he means to compliment Emma, but she thinks he is complimenting Harriet.

One of our main tasks in reading the novel is to decode all of the subtexts underlying seemingly casual interactions, just as the main characters must. The novel concludes by unraveling the mystery behind who loves whom, which allows us to understand Austen's subtext more fully.

READING OF TEXT

- ▶ Text Link:

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/158/158-h/158-h.htm>

- ▶ Link of Documentary on Jane Austen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSW4u6uA8Cw>