

ENGLISH



PRACTICE QUESTIONS

SILAS MARNER: 16 PRACTICE QUESTIONS

SCORE

/

PERCENTAGE

%

STEMUP

George Eliot: *Silas Marner*

Read the following extract from Chapter 2 of *Silas Marner* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, the narrator describes how Silas has lived alone in Raveloe for fifteen years, absorbed in weaving and hoarding his gold.

So, year after year, Silas Marner had lived in this solitude, his guineas rising in the iron pot, and his life narrowing and hardening itself more and more into a mere pulsation of desire and satisfaction that had no relation to any other being. His life had reduced itself to the functions of weaving and hoarding, without any contemplation of an end towards which the functions tended. The same sort of process has perhaps been undergone by wiser men, when they have been cut off from faith and love: only, instead of a loom and a heap of guineas, they have had some erudite research, some ingenious project, or some well-knit theory. Strangely Marner's face and figure shrank and bent themselves into a constant mechanical relation to the objects of his life, so that he produced the same sort of impression as a handle or a crooked tube, which has no meaning standing apart. The prominent eyes that used to look trusting and dreamy, now looked as if they had been made to see only one kind of thing that was very small, like tiny grain, for which they hunted everywhere: and he was so withered and yellow, that, though he was not yet forty, the children always called him "Old Master Marner".

(a) Explore how Eliot presents the character of Silas Marner in this extract.
Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, The narrator shows how years of solitude and hoarding gold have shrunk Silas's life and even his body.

Explain the importance of isolation and the corrupting power of money elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how isolation and the corrupting power of money is presented
- the effects isolation and the corrupting power of money has within the novel

(20)

(Total for this question = 40 marks)

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(a) Explore how Eliot presents isolation and the corrupting power of money in this extract. Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

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(b) In this extract, The narrator shows how years of solitude and hoarding gold have shrunk Silas's life and even his body.

Explain the importance of the character of Silas Marner elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how Silas Marner is presented
- the effects Silas Marner has within the novel

(20)

(Total for this question = 40 marks)

George Eliot: *Silas Marner*

Read the following extract from Chapter 5 of *Silas Marner* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, Silas is described at his loom shortly before he discovers that his gold has been stolen.

Any one who had looked at him as the red light shone upon his pale face, strange straining eyes, and meagre form, would perhaps have understood the mixture of contemptuous pity, dread, and suspicion with which he was regarded by his neighbours in Raveloe. Yet few men could be more harmless than poor Marner. In his truthful simple soul, not even the growing greed and worship of gold could beget any vice directly injurious to others. The light of his faith quite put out, and his affections made desolate, he had clung with all the force of his nature to his work and his money; and like all objects to which a man devotes himself, they had fashioned him into correspondence with themselves. His loom, as he wrought in it without ceasing, had in its turn wrought on him, and confirmed more and more the monotonous craving for its monotonous response. His gold, as he hung over it and saw it grow, gathered his power of loving together into a hard isolation like its own.

(a) Explore how Eliot presents the character of Silas Marner in this extract.

Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, The narrator explains that although the villagers fear Silas, he is harmless and has been shaped by his work and his gold.

Explain the importance of outsiders, community and prejudice elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how outsiders, community and prejudice is presented
- the effects outsiders, community and prejudice has within the novel

(20)

(Total for this question = 40 marks)

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(b) In this extract, The narrator explains that although the villagers fear Silas, he is harmless and has been shaped by his work and his gold.

Explain the importance of the character of Silas Marner elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how Silas Marner is presented
- the effects Silas Marner has within the novel

(20)

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George Eliot: *Silas Marner*

Read the following extract from Chapter 8 of *Silas Marner* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, Godfrey Cass rides home, dreading the moment he must confess to his father that his brother Dunstan has taken the rent money.

Godfrey rode along slowly, representing to himself the scene of confession to his father from which he felt that there was now no longer any escape. The revelation about the money must be made the very next morning; and if he withheld the rest, Dunstan would be sure to come back shortly, and, finding that he must bear the brunt of his father's anger, would tell the whole story out of spite, even though he had nothing to gain by it. There was one step, perhaps, by which he might still win Dunstan's silence and put off the evil day: he might tell his father that he had himself spent the money paid to him by Fowler; and as he had never been guilty of such an offence before, the affair would blow over after a little storming. But Godfrey could not bend himself to this. He felt that in letting Dunstan have the money, he had already been guilty of a breach of trust hardly less culpable than that of spending the money directly for his own behoof; and yet there was a distinction between the two acts which made him feel that the one was so much more blackening than the other as to be intolerable to him.

(a) Explore how Eliot presents the character of Godfrey Cass in this extract.
Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Godfrey weighs up how to avoid confessing to his father and finds that he cannot face either the truth or a lie.

Explain the importance of guilt, secrets and moral cowardice elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how guilt, secrets and moral cowardice is presented
- the effects guilt, secrets and moral cowardice has within the novel

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Godfrey rode along slowly, representing to himself the scene of confession to his father from which he felt that there was now no longer any escape. The revelation about the money must be made the very next morning; and if he withheld the rest, Dunstan would be sure to come back shortly, and, finding that he must bear the brunt of his father's anger, would tell the whole story out of spite, even though he had nothing to gain by it. There was one step, perhaps, by which he might still win Dunstan's silence and put off the evil day: he might tell his father that he had himself spent the money paid to him by Fowler; and as he had never been guilty of such an offence before, the affair would blow over after a little storming. But Godfrey could not bend himself to this. He felt that in letting Dunstan have the money, he had already been guilty of a breach of trust hardly less culpable than that of spending the money directly for his own behoof; and yet there was a distinction between the two acts which made him feel that the one was so much more blackening than the other as to be intolerable to him.

(a) Explore how Eliot presents guilt, secrets and moral cowardice in this extract. Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

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(b) In this extract, Godfrey weighs up how to avoid confessing to his father and finds that he cannot face either the truth or a lie.

Explain the importance of the character of Godfrey Cass elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how Godfrey Cass is presented
- the effects Godfrey Cass has within the novel

(20)

(Total for this question = 40 marks)

George Eliot: *Silas Marner*

Read the following extract from Chapter 12 of *Silas Marner* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, Silas returns to his cottage after his gold was stolen and finds a sleeping child on his hearth.

Turning towards the hearth, where the two logs had fallen apart, and sent forth only a red uncertain glimmer, he seated himself on his fireside chair, and was stooping to push his logs together, when, to his blurred vision, it seemed as if there were gold on the floor in front of the hearth. Gold! His own gold, brought back to him as mysteriously as it had been taken away! He felt his heart begin to beat violently, and for a few moments he was unable to stretch out his hand and grasp the restored treasure. The heap of gold seemed to glow and get larger beneath his agitated gaze. He leaned forward at last, and stretched forth his hand; but instead of the hard coin with the familiar resisting outline, his fingers encountered soft warm curls. In utter amazement, Silas fell on his knees and bent his head low to examine the marvel: it was a sleeping child: a round, fair thing, with soft yellow rings all over its head. Could this be his little sister come back to him in a dream: his little sister whom he had carried about in his arms for a year before she died, when he was a small boy without shoes or stockings?

(a) Explore how Eliot presents the character of Silas Marner in this extract.
Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Silas mistakes the golden curls of the sleeping Eppie for his stolen gold and finds a child in its place.

Explain the importance of redemption and the power of love elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how redemption and the power of love is presented
- the effects redemption and the power of love has within the novel

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Explain the importance of the character of Silas Marner elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how Silas Marner is presented
- the effects Silas Marner has within the novel

(20)

(Total for this question = 40 marks)

George Eliot: *Silas Marner*

Read the following extract from Chapter 14 of *Silas Marner* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, the narrator describes how Eppie has changed the way Silas sees the village and the purpose of his work.

Silas began now to think of Raveloe life entirely in relation to Eppie: she must have everything that was a good in Raveloe; and he listened docilely, that he might come to understand better what this life was, from which, for fifteen years, he had stood aloof as from a strange thing, with which he could have no communion: as some man who has a precious plant to which he would give a nurturing home in a new soil, thinks of the rain, and the sunshine, and all influences, in relation to his nursling, and asks industriously for all knowledge that will help him to satisfy the wants of the searching roots, or to guard leaf and bud from invading harm. The disposition to hoard had been utterly crushed at the very first by the loss of his long-stored gold: the coins he earned afterwards seemed as irrelevant as stones brought to complete a house suddenly buried by an earthquake; the sense of bereavement was too heavy upon him for the old thrill of satisfaction to arise again at the touch of the newly-earned coin. And now something had come to replace his hoard which gave a growing purpose to the earnings, drawing his hope and joy continually onward beyond the money.

(a) Explore how Eliot presents the character of Silas Marner in this extract.
Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Silas turns away from hoarding money and begins to live for Eppie and to join in village life.

Explain the importance of family, community and the value of love over wealth elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how family, community and the value of love over wealth is presented
- the effects family, community and the value of love over wealth has within the novel

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Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

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Explain the importance of the character of Silas Marner elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how Silas Marner is presented
- the effects Silas Marner has within the novel

(20)

(Total for this question = 40 marks)

George Eliot: *Silas Marner*

Read the following extract from Chapter 16 of *Silas Marner* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, sixteen years have passed and the narrator describes Silas and Eppie as they walk to church on a Sunday.

But it is impossible to mistake Silas Marner. His large brown eyes seem to have gathered a longer vision, as is the way with eyes that have been short-sighted in early life, and they have a less vague, a more answering gaze; but in everything else one sees signs of a frame much enfeebled by the lapse of the sixteen years. The weaver's bent shoulders and white hair give him almost the look of advanced age, though he is not more than five-and-fifty; but there is the freshest blossom of youth close by his side: a blonde dimpled girl of eighteen, who has vainly tried to chastise her curly auburn hair into smoothness under her brown bonnet: the hair ripples as obstinately as a brooklet under the March breeze, and the little ringlets burst away from the restraining comb behind and show themselves below the bonnet-crown. Eppie cannot help being rather vexed about her hair, for there is no other girl in Raveloe who has hair at all like it, and she thinks hair ought to be smooth. She does not like to be blameworthy even in small things: you see how neatly her prayer-book is folded in her spotted handkerchief.

(a) Explore how Eliot presents the character of Eppie in this extract.
Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, The narrator contrasts Silas's ageing body with the fresh youth of his adopted daughter Eppie.

Explain the importance of time, change and renewal elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how time, change and renewal is presented
- the effects time, change and renewal has within the novel

(20)

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Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

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Explain the importance of the character of Eppie elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how Eppie is presented
- the effects Eppie has within the novel

(20)

(Total for this question = 40 marks)

George Eliot: *Silas Marner*

Read the following extract from Chapter 19 of *Silas Marner* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, Godfrey and Nancy Cass have offered to adopt Eppie, and she now answers them in front of Silas.

“My dear, you’ll be a treasure to me,” said Nancy, in her gentle voice. “We shall want for nothing when we have our daughter.”

Eppie did not come forward and curtsy, as she had done before. She held Silas’s hand in hers, and grasped it firmly: it was a weaver’s hand, with a palm and finger-tips that were sensitive to such pressure: while she spoke with colder decision than before.

“Thank you, ma’am: thank you, sir, for your offers: they’re very great, and far above my wish. For I should have no delight i’ life any more if I was forced to go away from my father, and knew he was sitting at home, a-thinking of me and feeling lone. We’ve been used to be happy together every day, and I can’t think o’ no happiness without him. And he says he’d nobody i’ the world till I was sent to him, and he’d have nothing when I was gone. And he’s took care of me and loved me from the first, and I’ll cleave to him as long as he lives, and nobody shall ever come between him and me.”

(a) Explore how Eliot presents the character of Eppie in this extract.
Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Eppie refuses the Casses' offer of wealth and a place in their family because she will not leave Silas.
Explain the importance of family loyalty and the meaning of fatherhood elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how family loyalty and the meaning of fatherhood is presented
- the effects family loyalty and the meaning of fatherhood has within the novel

(20)

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- how Eppie is presented
- the effects Eppie has within the novel

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George Eliot: *Silas Marner*

Read the following extract from Conclusion of *Silas Marner* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, Eppie's wedding party approaches the garden of her new home beside the Stone-pits.

As the bridal group approached, a hearty cheer was raised in the Rainbow yard; and Ben Winthrop, whose jokes had retained their acceptable flavour, found it agreeable to turn in there and receive congratulations; not requiring the proposed interval of quiet at the Stone-pits before joining the company.

Eppie had a larger garden than she had ever expected there now; and in other ways there had been alterations at the expense of Mr. Cass, the landlord, to suit Silas's larger family. For he and Eppie had declared that they would rather stay at the Stone-pits than go to any new home. The garden was fenced with stones on two sides, but in front there was an open fence, through which the flowers shone with answering gladness, as the four united people came within sight of them.

"O father," said Eppie, "what a pretty home ours is! I think nobody could be happier than we are."

(a) Explore how Eliot presents the character of Eppie in this extract.
Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, The novel closes with Eppie declaring that she and Silas could not be happier in their garden home.
Explain the importance of happiness, family and the rewards of love elsewhere in the novel.
In your answer, you must consider:

- how happiness, family and the rewards of love is presented
- the effects happiness, family and the rewards of love has within the novel

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