

USEFUL VOCABULARY WHEN ANALYSING A SHORT STORY OR AN EXCERPT FROM A NOVEL

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LITERARY CRITICISM

a critic, a book reviewer: *un critique*

a criticism: *une critique*

to summarise a chapter: *résumer un chapitre*

to guess: *deviner*

to infer that ... : *en conclure que ...*

an analysis: *une analyse*

a conclusion: une conclusion

to comment on a passage: *commenter un passage*

the skill of a writer: *le talent d'un écrivain*

to review a book: *faire la critique d'un livre*

to criticize: *critiquer*

to quote from the text: *citer à partir du texte*

to anticipate: *deviner la suite*

to induce that: *déduire que...*

to analyse: *analyser*

to conclude that ... : *conclure que ...*

to form an opinion: *se faire une opinion*

THE DOCUMENT

WHAT? * What type of document is this?

an autobiographical novel: *un roman autobiographique*

a historical novel: *un roman historique*

a children's story: *une histoire destinée aux enfants*

a detective novel: *un roman policier*

a biography: *une biographie*

a picaresque novel: *un roman picaresque*

a romance: *une histoire d'amour*

a thriller: *un roman à suspense*

WHEN? * When was the text written?

in the 20s: *dans les années 20*

at a time when: *à une époque où*

WHO? * Who wrote the text?

a committed writer: *un auteur engagé*

a famous writer: *un auteur connu*

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

THE NARRATION

* WHO SPEAKS? WHO SEES?

the narrator: *le narrateur*

first person narrator: *narrateur à la première personne*

direct speech: *discours direct*

free direct speech: *discours direct libre*

the focalizer: *le focaliseur (celui qui voit)*

the narrator's viewpoint : *le point de vue du narrateur*

the point of view: *le point de vue*

stream of consciousness: *courant de conscience*

character-narrator: *personnage-narrateur*

indirect speech: *discours indirect*

free indirect speech: *discours indirect libre*

the focalized: *le focalisé (celui qui est vu)*

the scope of observation: *le champ d'observation*

shift in point of view: *changement de point de vue*

* **zero focalization** when the scene and action are shown through the eyes of an **omniscient narrator** who knows everything

* **internal focalization** when the scene and action are shown through the eyes of a **character-narrator** -
(the reader can know the thoughts or feelings of characters)

* **external focalization** when the reader can only see and hear **what a character sees and hear** -
(the reader cannot know the thoughts or feelings of characters)

* WHAT DEGREE OF INTIMACY is established between reader and narrator?

to identify with a character: *s'identifier à un personnage*

to picture to oneself. *se représenter*

THE DIEGESIS

*** WHAT?**a narrative: *un récit*an (auto)biographical narrative: *un récit (auto)biographique*a first-person narrative: *un récit à la première personne*a third-person narrative: *un récit à la troisième personne*a dialogue: *un dialogue*an interior monologue: *un monologue intérieur**** What is the nature of the passage?**a description: *une description**** WHO?**a character: *un personnage**** Who is/are the main character(s)?***** WHEN?***** When does the action take place? How long does it last?**the action takes place in 1948: *l'action se déroule en 1948* / at night: *la nuit* / on an autumn day: *un jour d'automne*the time span: *le cadre temporel*to span / to last: *durer*to set a story in the days of: ... *situer une histoire à l'époque de**** Is it symbolic ?**to be symbolic of: *être symbolique de**** WHERE?***** Where does the action take place?**the setting: *le cadre dans lequel se situe l'action, le cadre spatial*indoor: *à l'intérieur* / outdoor: *à l'extérieur*to unfold: *se dérouler*to take place: *avoir lieu**** Is it symbolic ?**a make-believe world: *un monde de faux-semblants*to create an atmosphere: *créer une atmosphère**** WHAT is the story ABOUT?**the plot: *l'intrigue**** How does the story unfold?**the climax: *le point culminant, le moment le plus fort*the anti-climax: *la chute*the turning point of the story: *un moment charnière dans l'histoire*a twist in the story: *un retournement de situation*a clue: *un indice*a hint: *une allusion*a flashback: *un retour en arrière*a prolepsis: *une prolepse / anticipation*the outcome, the unravelling: *le dénouement / la fin***NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE****CHARACTERS AND CHARACTERIZATION***** DESCRIPTION***** How is the character described?**the portrayal of a character: *la façon de décrire un personnage*to portray: *faire le portrait de, dépeindre*character traits: *des traits de caractère*a caricature: *une caricature*a flat character: *un personnage défini par un seul trait dominant*a stereotype: *un stéréotype*a round character: *un personnage à la personnalité complexe**** What does he/she look like? How is he/she dressed?**features: *des traits physiques (ou de caractère)*physical appearance: *l'apparence physique*casual clothes: *vêtements de sport*fancy clothes: *vêtements de luxe**** ATTITUDES***** How does the character act? How does he/she react to others?**to be rather inconsistent: *agir de façon inattendue* // to behave with inconsistency: *avoir un comportement imprévisible*a straightforward attitude: *un comportement franc/sans équivoque* # an awkward attitude: *un comportement étrange*to have a true to life attitude: *avoir une attitude réaliste, plausible**** SPEECH***** What language does he use?**speech: *la façon de parler, le discours*refined speech: *parler de façon raffiné*vulgar speech: *parler vulgairement**** What does it reveal about him/her?**social class: *classe sociale*family background: *environnement familial*dwelling place: *lieu d'habitation*profession / job: *profession / travail*to belong to: *appartenir à*to be representative of: *être représentatif de**** FEELINGS & THOUGHTS***** What does he/she feel and think?**a feeling: *un sentiment*to feel: *ressentir*a thought: *une pensée*to think of/about: *penser à*motivations: *les raisons qui poussent à agir d'une façon particulière*goals: *but poursuivis***STYLE**

- to resort to stylistic devices: *avoir recours à des procédés stylistiques*
- a realistic style: *un style réaliste*
- a contrast: *un contraste*
- echoes: *des échos*
- recurrence / repetition: *répétition*
- time and space references: *références spacio-temporelles*
- a symbolic word: *un mot chargé d'un sens symbolique*

- a stylistic device: *un procédé stylistique*
- realism: *le réalisme*
- parallels: *parallèles*
- accumulation: *accumulation*
- recurrent: *fréquent/périodique*
- relevant phrase: *une expression adéquate*
- symbolism: *le symbolisme*

* TYPOGRAPHY

a typographical device: *un procédé typographique*
question / exclamation mark: *point d'interrogation / d'exclamation*

punctuation: *la ponctuation*

* VOCABULARY

lexical field: *champ lexical*
connotations: *des connotations*

word network: *réseau lexical*
figurative language: *langage figuré*

* SYNTAX

a linguistic device: *un procédé linguistique*
linkwords: *mots charnières, articulations*
verbs: *les verbes*
adjectives: *les adjectifs*

modals: *les modaux*
tenses of the verbs: *les temps des verbes*
adverbs: *les adverbes*

* RHETHORIC

- the imagery: *l'ensemble des images*
- a simile: *une comparaison*
- a cliché: *un cliché*
- a metaphor: *une métaphore*

lush imagery: *des images riches et complexes*
an allegory: *une allégorie*
a commonplace: *un lieu commun*
a suitable metaphor: *une métaphore adaptée*

CONCLUSION

THE TONE OF THE PASSAGE

amusing : *amusant*
ironical: *ironique*
witty: *spirituel*
tragic: *tragique*

humorous: *humoristique*
satirical: *satirique*
non-committal: *neutre*
dramatic: *dramatique*

THE ROLE OF THE PASSAGE

*** What did the writer want to suggest/show in this short story/excerpt?**

a parody: *une parodie*

a satire: *une satire*

a moral: *une morale*

to assess the importance of : *évaluer l'importance de*

to achieve a contrast with : *établir un contraste avec*

to draw a parallel

to point at a discrepancy: *mettre le doigt sur une contradiction*

to convey the impression of / that: *transmit*

to stress / to emphasize: *mettre l'accent sur*

A FEW DEFINITIONS

- **the climax**: a high point in the action of a story. Before the climax, the story may develop in many ways, with the climax, alternatives are removed and the narrative proceeds to the only logical ending.
 - **point of view**: this notion refers to who tells the story.
 - **narrative technique**: this notion refers to the way a story is told: the writer may choose to show the events or to tell them. He may feel sympathy for his characters or be more or less distant from them. He may make the reader more or less well-disposed to the characters.
 - **connotation**: an associated meaning that clusters around the literal meaning of a word.
 - **figurative language**: uses images to force the reader to use his imagination.
 - **irony**: lies in the difference between the way things are or opinions seem to be and the way they really are.
 - **a parody**: a piece of writing which copies the style of someone well-known in a humorous way
 - **a satire**: the literary art of deriding a situation by making it ridiculous. The satirist considers himself as the guardian of standards and truth. He wishes to correct human vice or folly.