

Awakening Exam: (Test D)

Directions:

Part One: (50 points)

- Write an analysis of the *Awakening* Passage you have been given.
- Use quotes from the text as evidence.
- Use paragraph form.
- Use at least three of the five elements of the literature explained in *How to Read a Text (and understand it)*.
- Develop out your analysis, by persuading the reader how this passage is related to a big idea we have been studying in this course (an American Studies theme).

Part Two: (50 points)

- Write an analysis of the example of visual art you have been given.
- Use paragraph form.
- Use at least five of the eight elements and principles of visual art explained in *How to Look at a Work of Art (and Understand it)*.
- Develop out your analysis, by persuading the reader how this example of visual art is related to a big idea we have been studying in *The Awakening*.

When you are finished, submit your file to turnitin.com. Please make sure that your name is on the top of the file, as well as the number of the exam.

How to Read a Text (and understand it)

Elements of Literature

Tone – the emotion being expressed by the writer – look to word choice patterns to indicate what the tone is – consider whether the tone is consistent or where it might change – consider whether the tone of the description of the setting might be undermining the tone of the actions in that setting. Sometimes the tone is quite subtle. Almost always the tone is more complex than a single word.

Setting – where and when the scene takes place. Consider what else has taken place here. Consider what the emotion is associated with this place or time. Consider what came before and what comes after. Consider why and how time and place is relevant to the tone, characters, point of view and figures of speech used in the scene.

Character – there are typically seven ways to understand character...consider the degree to which these seven ways emphasize one another or undermine one another.

- What a character
 - o Says
 - o Does
 - o Thinks
- How a character reacts to her surroundings
- How others react to this character
- Direct description
- Degree of consistency

Point of view – who is telling the story? How? Why? What tone is being used to tell this story? Who is the intended audience? How does the reader know?

- First person – a story told using “I.”
- Second person – a story told using “you.”
- Third person – a story told, using “he.”

Figurative Language – not the literal aspects of the story, but what is meant symbolically. Consider how such symbolic thinking supports or undermines the character, setting, point of view or tone.

- Metaphor – comparisons without “like” or “as.”
- Simile – comparisons using “like” or “as.”
- Hyperbole – purposeful exaggerations.
- Symbols – physical objects used to represent abstract ideas.
- Verbal Irony – saying one statement while meaning the opposite.
- Dramatic Irony – when the audience knows more than characters.

Awakening Passage

She [Mademoiselle Reisz] entered the hall with him during a lull in the dance. She made an awkward, imperious little bow as she went in. She was a homely woman, with a small weazened face and body and eyes that glowed. She had absolutely no taste in dress, and wore a batch of rusty black lace with a bunch of artificial violets pinned to the side of her hair.

"Ask Mrs. Pontellier what she would like to hear me play," she requested of Robert. She sat perfectly still before the piano, not touching the keys, while Robert carried her message to Edna at the window. A general air of surprise and genuine satisfaction fell upon every one as they saw the pianist enter. There was a settling down, and a prevailing air of expectancy everywhere. Edna was a trifle embarrassed at being thus signaled out for the imperious little woman's favor. She would not dare to choose, and begged that Mademoiselle Reisz would please herself in her selections.

Edna was what she herself called very fond of music. Musical strains, well rendered, had a way of evoking pictures in her mind. She sometimes liked to sit in the room of mornings when Madame Ratignolle played or practiced. One piece which that lady played Edna had entitled "Solitude." It was a short, plaintive, minor strain. The name of the piece was something else, but she called it "Solitude." When she heard it there came before her imagination the figure of a man standing beside a desolate rock on the seashore. He was naked. His attitude was one of hopeless resignation as he looked toward a distant bird winging its flight away from him.

Another piece called to her mind a dainty young woman clad in an Empire gown, taking mincing dancing steps as she came down a long avenue between tall hedges. Again, another reminded her of children at play, and still another of nothing on earth but a demure lady stroking a cat.

The very first chords which Mademoiselle Reisz struck upon the piano sent a keen tremor down Mrs. Pontellier's spinal column. It was not the first time she had heard an artist at the piano. Perhaps it was the first time she was ready, perhaps the first time her being was tempered to take an impress of the abiding truth.

She waited for the material pictures which she thought would gather and blaze before her imagination. She waited in vain. She saw no pictures of solitude, of hope, of longing, or of despair. But the very passions themselves were aroused within her soul, swaying it, lashing it, as the waves daily beat upon her splendid body. She trembled, she was choking, and the tears blinded her.

Mademoiselle had finished. She arose, and bowing her stiff, lofty bow, she went away, stopping for neither thanks nor applause. As she passed along the gallery she patted Edna upon the shoulder.

"Well, how did you like my music?" she asked. The young woman was unable to answer; she pressed the hand of the pianist convulsively. Mademoiselle Reisz perceived her agitation and even her tears. She patted her again upon the shoulder as she said:

"You are the only one worth playing for. Those others? Bah!" and she went shuffling and sidling on down the gallery toward her room.

But she was mistaken about "those others." Her playing had aroused a fever of enthusiasm. "What passion!" "What an artist!" "I have always said no one could play Chopin like Mademoiselle Reisz!" "That last prelude! Bon Dieu! It shakes a man!"

It was growing late, and there was a general disposition to disband. But some one, perhaps it was Robert, thought of a bath at that mystic hour and under that mystic moon.

How to Look at a Work of Art (and Understand it)

The website: <http://www.artsconnected.org/toolkit/encyclopedia.html>.

This website, hosted by the Minneapolis Institute of Arts is excellent. Its interactive nature is worth exploring. Below, you will find the broad categories, but spending time on the website will allow you to see great examples of these elements and principles of art. It will also allow you to see how these elements and principles can create meaning in art.

Visual Elements

- Line
- Shape
- Color
- Space
- Texture

Visual principles

- Balance
- Emphasis
- Movement/Rhythm

We have already been discussing these elements and principles in class when we discussed the painted portraits of Benjamin Franklin and George Washington and Paul Revere; the photographic portraits of Frederick Douglass; and the other images we have looked at (from slave auction notices to film excerpts).

Now we will have more academic names for some of these observation categories. We will use these elements and principles for the rest of the year.

When writing an analysis of a work of art, you should aim for discussing at least three visual elements and at least one visual principle. These elements and principles work in a similar way to the elements of literature: tone, figures of speech, setting, character, and point of view. You need to make some observations of these aspects of the work of literature in order to explain what it means. Similarly, you should make some observations about the elements and principles of art in order to explain what the work of art means.



Young Mother Sewing by Mary Cassatt 1900 (36 x 29 in)