

# LITERATURE 1A

## TEACHER'S NOTES

AUTHOR:	George Eliot
TITLE:	<i>The Mill on the Floss</i> (Book II School time)
THEMES:	School, learning (unit 3)
WRITING:	An argumentative essay
THINK STYLE:	Pen names

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

George Eliot (1819–1880) was born in Warwickshire, England. Her works include *Adam Bede* (1859), *Middlemarch* (1874) and *Daniel Deronda* (1876).

George Eliot was the pen name of Mary Ann Evans. As a young woman, she was very intellectual and she translated two religious texts from German into English. In 1849, she moved to London and met the writer and philosopher George Lewes, who had a great influence on her life. They lived together without being married, which was scandalous in Victorian England. Lewes encouraged her to write fiction. Her novels were a great success and people were curious to know who George Eliot was. In the end, she revealed her true identity.

### INTRODUCTION

Ask students if they have heard of George Eliot or *The Mill on the Floss*. Write any ideas on the board in note form. Use the information in the *About the author* box to provide an introduction. Ask if students know any of the novels mentioned. Depending on the class, it may be appropriate to use L1 at this stage.

### START THINKING ...

- 1 Draw students' attention to the film still at the top of the worksheet. Elicit responses to the questions: *What can you see in the first picture?* (a mill, a building with a wheel, some water) *Where do you think the scene is?* (England) *What do you think the building is used for?* (to make cotton)

Organise the class into pairs or small groups. Set a time limit of a few minutes for students to discuss the questions. Then ask students for their opinions. Encourage them to back up their answers with examples. For example, 'I admire creativity – I would love to be able to draw.' 'I respect Malala Yousafzai because she's very brave.' Encourage them to give reasons to justify their answers.

- 2 Draw students' attention to the text above the film still which 'sets the scene' and clarify understanding. Play the audio. When students have read and listened to the text once, allow time to check unfamiliar words in the glossary.

### Optional extension

Ask some comprehension questions to check general understanding of the text.

- 3 Students read through the questions. Check for understanding and remind them to refer closely to the text to find the answers.

### Answers

1 Tom 2 He didn't think he was going to like him, but then he saw he was drawing and admired him. 3 He has to look at things carefully and then practise drawing them. 4 Philip is better at Latin than Tom. 5 Philip doesn't mind not having art lessons because he can concentrate on other subjects. 6 He agrees to learn Latin because he admires Sir John Crake and wants to be like him.

- 4 Students read the text again. Discuss the questions and answers with the class.

### Suggested answers

1 Probably pleased/He hopes they can have lessons together. 2 Philip seems to be a serious student who understands the importance of a good education; Tom doesn't seem to like studying much, especially Latin. 3 Friendly, curious, lively 4 The school subjects they study; talking about hunting; gentlemen.



### CRITICAL THINKING

Ask the students the question: *How do children learn?* Elicit ideas such as going to school, learning from their parents, visiting museums, going to the library, etc. Now explain that in some countries, parents choose not to send their children to school and educate them at home instead. Ask them to think about the advantages and disadvantages of home schooling.

Working individually, students make a list of the advantages and disadvantages. If students struggle for ideas, encourage them to think about what things would be different if they were studying at home. Ask them to think about where they would study, what resources and equipment they would need, what activities they wouldn't be able to do if they were the only student. When students have finished, ask them to work in small groups to compare their ideas. You can then bring their arguments together on the board and discuss their ideas as a class.

### VOCABULARY

- 5 Read through the sentences one at a time to check comprehension of any unknown vocabulary. Working individually, students complete the sentences with the correct form of the words in the glossary. Ask individual students for answers.

## Answers

- 1 clergymen 2 curiosity 3 companions 4 donkeys  
5 Hunting 6 mills

### Optional extension

Ask students which facts they find interesting or surprising and why. Point out that these facts all relate to life in the 1800s. Ask them to think about what life would have been like for a child whose parents worked in a cotton mill at this time. Ask them to think about their daily life and what school was like.

- 6 Ask students to read the text again and to underline five more words that are new to them. Ask them to write the words in sentences. They then read their sentences in pairs and correct each other's mistakes.

### ROLE PLAY

- 7 Organise the class into pairs. Read the instruction and check that students understand what they are going to do. Ask two students to read the first part of the conversation. Brainstorm ideas and phrases on the board (you need: paint, colour, background; *first you need to, then, that is a great idea, Not bad!*). Set a time limit of 5–10 minutes. Monitor and offer support while students are preparing their role play. Students should write their scripts. Encourage as many students as possible to perform their role plays. Consider asking groups to perform to each other. The 'audience' groups can monitor language use and make corrections if necessary. This can also be done as a full-class exercise.

## LISTENING

- 8 Before listening, explain that students are going to hear about what happened when Tom's father and sister come to visit him at school. Play the recording twice. The first time, encourage students to listen without taking notes. The second time, they circle the correct answers.

## Answers

- 1 Mr Tulliver 2 Mr Stelling 3 Maggie 4 Tom

- 9 Students read through the questions. Encourage students to answer from memory. Play the recording again for students to complete their answers and to check.

## Answers

- 1 F 2 F 3 T 4 DS 5 F

### AUDIOSCRIPT (adapted and abridged from Book II School-time)

'Well my boy,' Mr Tulliver said to Tom, when Mr Stelling had left the room. 'You look very well! School agrees with you!'

Tom wished he looked rather ill.

'I don't think I am well, Father,' said Tom; 'I wish you'd tell Mr Stelling not to make me do Geometry; it gives me toothache, I think.' (Toothache was the only illness Tom had ever had.)

'Geometry, my boy, why what's that?' said Mr Tulliver.

'I don't know, it's definitions, and triangles ... and things. It's all in a book I have to learn – it doesn't make sense to me!'

'You mustn't say that,' said Mr Tulliver. 'You must learn what the teacher tells you. He knows what is important to study.'

'I'll help you, Tom,' said Maggie. 'I've come to stay if Mrs Stelling invites me. I've brought all my clothes and things, haven't I, Father?'

'You help me, you silly little thing!' said Tom. He quite liked the idea of showing her his Geometry book. 'I'd like to see you doing one of my lessons! I learn Latin, too. Girls never learn that. They're too silly.'

'I know what Latin is very well,' said Maggie. 'Latin's a language. There are Latin words in the dictionary, like *bonus*.'

'Well done, little one,' said Mr Tulliver laughing, while Tom felt annoyed with Maggie for being so clever. 'Wait until she sees all my books – she won't feel so clever then!'

Mr Tulliver agreed to let Maggie stay with Tom for two weeks. He was secretly pleased to leave his clever little daughter with Mr Stelling who would appreciate how intelligent she was.

'Come with me to the study, Maggie,' said Tom, as their father drove away.

'Oh, look at all these books!' she exclaimed when she saw the bookcases in the study. 'I'd love to have as many books as that!'

'You couldn't read them,' said Tom, 'because they're all in Latin!'

'No, they're not! This one is in English, look it's about Roman history. Can I have a look at it?'

'No, you'd better not,' said Tom. 'Mr Stelling doesn't let anybody touch his books without asking him first. I'll get into trouble if you do.'

'Very well. Let me see all your books then!' said Maggie.

'It's time for me to do my homework now. Look at what I've got to do – Maths and Latin.'

He found the page in the Maths book and gave it to Maggie. She started reading it but stopped and turned to Tom.

'It's nonsense. It doesn't make sense. I don't think anybody could understand that!'

'There now, Maggie!' said Tom taking his book away., 'You see you're not as clever as you thought you were!'

## WRITING: AN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

- 10 Ask students to explain what an argumentative essay is. Read through the *Writing* skills box. Ask students to explain *topic*, *evidence* and *opposite*. Students can write their essay in class or for homework. Students then swap their argumentative essay with a partner. They read each other's work and highlight any mistakes. They assess whether the student has answered the question fully and whether they have followed the steps. They then return the argumentative essay to the original student who looks at the comments and redrafts their work. Ask some students to read their argumentative essays out loud to the class.

## THINK PEN NAMES

- 11 Read and check that students understand the meaning of *pen name* (a name chosen by a writer to use instead of using their real name when publishing books). Ask them to find a synonym for pen name

(pseudonym). Students discuss reasons why writers may choose to use a different name.

### **Suggested answers**

Some, like Stephen King, may want to write more than one type of book at a time. Others, like J.K. Rowling, may be famous for writing one genre (for example, romance) and want to write another genre (for example, horror). Or, like C.S. Lewis, they may be writing about a true experience and might not want everyone to know it happened to them.

### **Additional reading or internet research topics**

- Victorian Britain
- Education in Victorian Society
- *The Mill on the Floss* themes
- The life of George Eliot