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grammar, style, and proofreading exercises

**The Grammar dog Guide to
Silas Marner
by George Eliot**

**All exercises use sentences from the novel.
Includes over 250 multiple choice questions.**

About Gramwardog

Gramwardog was founded in 2001 by Mary Jane McKinney, a high school English teacher and dedicated grammarian. She and other experienced English teachers in both high school and college regard grammar and style as the key to unlocking the essence of an author.

Their philosophy, that grammar and literature are best understood when learned together, led to the formation of Gramwardog.com, a means of sharing knowledge about the structure and patterns of language unique to specific authors. These patterns are what make a great book *a great book*. The arduous task of analyzing works for grammar and style has yielded a unique product, guaranteed to enlighten the reader of literary classics.

Gramwardog's strategy is to put the author's words under the microscope. The result yields an increased appreciation of the art of writing and awareness of the importance and power of language.



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SILAS MARNER by George Eliot – Grammar and Style
All exercises use sentences from the novel

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SAMPLE EXERCISE - SILAS MARNER by George Eliot

EXERCISE 5 COMPLEMENTS

Identify the complements in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

d.o. = direct object i.o. = indirect object p.n. = predicate nominative
p.a. = predicate adjective o.p. = object of preposition

- ___ 1. To the peasants of old times, the world outside their own direct experience was a region of vagueness and mystery.
- ___ 2. Experience had bred no fancies in him that could raise the phantasm of appetite.
- ___ 3. And Raveloe was a village where many of the old echoes lingered, undrowned by new voices.

EXERCISE 6 PHRASES

Identify the phrases in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

par = participle ger = gerund infin = infinitive appos = appositive prep = preposition

- ___ 1. In this way it came to pass that those scattered linen-weavers – emigrants from the town into the country – were to the last regarded as aliens by their rustic neighbours . . .
- ___ 2. At this time the senior deacon was taken dangerously ill, and, being a childless widower, he was tended night and day by some of the younger brethren or sisters.
- ___ 3. On their return to the vestry there was further deliberation.

EXERCISE 9 STYLE: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Identify the figurative language in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

p = personification s = simile m = metaphor o = onomatopoeia

- ___ 1. Their imagination is almost barren of the images that feed desire and hope, but is all overgrown by recollections that are a perpetual pasture to fear.
- ___ 2. He seemed to weave, like the spider, from pure impulse, without reflection.
- ___ 3. . . . and the Red House was without that presence of the wife and mother which is the fountain of wholesome love and fear in parlour and kitchen.

SAMPLE EXERCISE - SILAS MARNER by George Eliot

EXERCISE 12

STYLE: ALLUSIONS AND SYMBOLS

Identify the type of allusion used in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

a. mythology b. religion c. insanity d. folklore/superstition e. fatalism/chance

- ___1. Among the members of his church there was one young man, a little older than himself, with whom he had long lived in such close friendship that it was the custom . . . to call them David and Jonathan.
- ___2. Poor Marner went out with that despair in his soul – that shaken trust in God and man, which is little short of madness to a loving nature.
- ___3. Minds that have been unhinged from their old faith and love have perhaps sought this Lethean influence of exile in which the past becomes dreamy because its symbols have all vanished . . .

EXERCISE 13

STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

He seemed to weave, like the spider, from pure impulse, without reflection. Every man's work, pursued steadily, tends in this way to become an end in itself, and so to bridge over the loveless chasms of his life. Silas's hand satisfied itself with throwing the shuttle, and his eye with seeing the little squares in the cloth complete themselves under his effort. Then there were the calls of hunger; and Silas, in his solitude, had to provide his own breakfast, dinner, and supper, to fetch his own water from the well, and put his own kettle on the fire; and all these immediate promptings helped, along with the weaving, to reduce his life to the unquestioning activity of a spinning insect. He hated the thought of the past; there was nothing that called out his love and fellowship toward the strangers he had come amongst; and the future was all dark, for there was no Unseen Love that cared for him. Thought was arrested by utter bewilderment, now its old narrow pathway was closed, and affection seemed to have died under the bruise that had fallen on its keenest nerves. But at last Mrs. Osgood's table-linen was finished, and Silas was paid in gold. His earnings in his native town, where he worked for a wholesale dealer, had been after a lower rate; he had been paid weekly, and of his weekly earnings a large proportion had gone to objects of piety and charity. Now, for the first time in his life, he had five bright guineas put into his hand; no man expected a share of them, and he loved no man that he should offer him a share. But what were the guineas to him who saw no vista beyond countless days of weaving? (Chapter II)

Read the passage a second time, marking figurative language, sensory imagery, poetic devices, and any other patterns of diction and rhetoric, then answer the questions below.

- 1 He seemed to weave, like the spider, from pure impulse, without reflection. Every man's
- 2 work, pursued steadily, tends in this way to become an end in itself, and so to bridge over
- 3 the loveless chasms of his life. Silas's hand satisfied itself with throwing the shuttle, and
- 4 his eye with seeing the little squares in the cloth complete themselves under his effort.

SAMPLE EXERCISE - SILAS MARNER by George Eliot

5 Then there were the calls of hunger; and Silas, in his solitude, had to provide his own
6 breakfast, dinner, and supper, to fetch his own water from the well, and put his own kettle
7 on the fire; and all these immediate promptings helped, along with the weaving, to reduce
8 his life to the unquestioning activity of a spinning insect. He hated the thought of the past;
9 there was nothing that called out his love and fellowship toward the strangers he had come
10 amongst; and the future was all dark, for there was no Unseen Love that cared for him.
11 Thought was arrested by utter bewilderment, now its old narrow pathway was closed,
12 and affection seemed to have died under the bruise that had fallen on its keenest nerves.
13 But at last Mrs. Osgood's table-linen was finished, and Silas was paid in gold. His earnings
14 in his native town, where he worked for a wholesale dealer, had been after a lower rate;
15 he had been paid weekly, and of his weekly earnings a large proportion had gone to
16 objects of piety and charity. Now, for the first time in his life, he had five bright guineas
17 put into his hand; no man expected a share of them, and he loved no man that he should
18 offer him a share. But what were the guineas to him who saw no vista beyond countless
19 days of weaving? (Chapter II)

- ___1. Line 1 contains an example of . . .
a. metaphor b. simile c. personification d. hyperbole
- ___2. In Lines 1-3 work, the description of *work as a bridge over the loveless chasms of his life* is an example of . . .
a. metaphor b. simile c. personification d. hyperbole
- ___3. A shift occurs in Line . . .
a. 7 b. 9 c. 11 d. 13