



The Grammar Dog Guide to
Ethan Frome
by Edith Wharton

**All quizzes use sentences from the novel.
Includes over 240 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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SAMPLE EXERCISES - ETHAN FROME by Edith Wharton

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. Day by day, after the December snows were over, a blazing blue sky poured down torrents of light and air on the white landscape, which gave them back in an intenser glitter.

- ___2. Mrs. Hale's father had been the village lawyer of the previous generation, and "lawyer Varnum's house," where my landlady still lived with her mother, was the most considerable mansion in the village.

- ___3. And though all conceded that Ethan Frome's had been beyond the common measure, no one gave me an explanation of the look in his face which, as I persisted in thinking, neither poverty nor physical suffering could have put there.

EXERCISE 6 PHRASES

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

par = participle *ger* = gerund *inf* = infinitive *appos* = appositive *prep* = preposition

- ___1. Harmon thoughtfully passed his tobacco to the other cheek.

- ___2. She was not unwilling to exercise this faculty, and I had great hopes of getting from her the missing facts of Ethan Frome's story, or rather such a key to his character as should coordinate the facts I knew.

- ___3. On my arrival at Starkfield, Denis Eady, the rich Irish grocer, who was the proprietor of Starkfield's nearest approach to a livery stable, had entered into an agreement to send me over daily to Corbury Flats, where I had to pick up my train for the Junction.

EXERCISE 9 STYLE: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

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

p = personification *m* = metaphor *s* = simile *o* = onomatopoeia *h* = hyperbole

- ___1. . . . the storms of February had pitched their white tents about the devoted village and the wild cavalry of March winds had charged down to their support.

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- ___2. Her mind was a storehouse of innocuous anecdote and any question about her acquaintances brought forth a volume of detail.
- ___3. Ethan Frome drove in silence, the reins loosely held in his left hand, his brown seamed profile, under the helmet-like peak of the cap, relieved against the banks of snow like the bronze image of a hero.

EXERCISE 12 STYLE: ALLUSIONS AND SYMBOLS

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

a. constellations b. illness/medicine c. money/poverty d. death e. fate/chance

- ___1. I had been told that Frome was poor, and that the sawmill and the arid acres of his farm yielded scarcely enough to keep his household through the winter.
- ___2. “When she got the rheumatism so bad she couldn’t move around she used to sit up there and watch the road by the hour.”
- ___3. In a sky of iron the points of the Dipper hung like icicles and Orion flashed his cold fires.

EXERCISE 13 STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

I had been sent up by my employers on a job connected with the powerhouse at Corbury Junction, and a long-drawn carpenters’ strike had so delayed the work that I found myself anchored at Starkfield – the nearest habitable spot – for the best part of the winter. I chafed at first, and then, under the hypnotizing effect of routine, gradually began to find a grim satisfaction in the life. During the early part of my stay I had been struck by the contrast between the vitality of the climate and the deadness of the community. Day by day, after the December snows were over, a blazing blue sky poured down torrents of light and air on the white landscape, which gave them back in an intenser glitter. One would have supposed that such an atmosphere must quicken the emotions as well as the blood; but it seemed to produce no change except that of retarding still more the sluggish pulse of Starkfield. When I had been there a little longer, and had seen this phase of crystal clearness followed by long stretches of cold; when the storms of February had pitched their white tents about the devoted village and the wild cavalry of March winds had charged down to their support; I began to understand why Starkfield emerged from its six months’ siege like a starved garrison capitulating without quarter. Twenty years earlier the means of resistance must have been far fewer, and the enemy in command of almost all the lines of access between the beleaguered villages; and, considering these things, I felt the sinister force of Harmon’s phrase: “Most of the smart ones get away.” But if that were the case, how could any combination of obstacles have hindered the flight of a man like Ethan Frome? (From Ethan Frome)

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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 I had been sent up by my employers on a job connected with the powerhouse at Corbury Junction,
2 and a long-drawn carpenters' strike had so delayed the work that I found myself anchored at
3 Starkfield – the nearest habitable spot – for the best part of the winter. I chafed at first, and then,
4 under the hypnotizing effect of routine, gradually began to find a grim satisfaction in the life.
5 During the early part of my stay I had been struck by the contrast between the vitality of the
6 climate and the deadness of the community. Day by day, after the December snows were over,
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14 months' siege like a starved garrison capitulating without quarter. Twenty years earlier the
15 means of resistance must have been far fewer, and the enemy in command of almost all the lines
16 of access between the beleaguered villages; and, considering these things, I felt the sinister force of
17 Harmon's phrase: "Most of the smart ones get away." But if that were the case, how could any
18 combination of obstacles have hindered the flight of a man like Ethan Frome?

- ___ 1. ALL of the following descriptions are parallel in function EXCEPT . . .
- a. *the hypnotizing effect of routine* (Line 4)
 - b. *the deadness of the community* (Line 6)
 - c. *the sluggish pulse of Starkfield* (Line 10)
 - d. *a starved garrison capitulating without quarter* (Line 14)
- ___ 2. ALL of the following devices are used to develop tone EXCEPT . . .
- a. figurative language
 - b. sensory imagery
 - c. flashback
 - d. rhetorical question
- ___ 3. Lines 11-16 contain an example of . . .
- a. allegory
 - b. extended metaphor
 - c. analogy
 - d. parable

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