

EXPLORING LANGUAGE

Because this is a translation, you are not commenting directly on the writer's use of language. However, some points about language can be made.

- Look for contrasts, such as that between the rich and sophisticated language used to describe Madame Loisel's dreams and her experiences at the party ('She danced ecstatically, wildly, intoxicated with pleasure...') compared with the blunter and more direct language used to emphasise the extent of her poverty after the necklace is lost ('Her hair was untidy ... her hands were red').
- Dialogue is used to illustrate character, such as the homeliness of her husband: 'Ah! Stew! Splendid! There's nothing I like better...'. It is also used to create drama. For example, look at the exchange between Madame Loisel and Madame Forestier at the very end.

Find some more examples to illustrate these points.

ACTIVITY 1

A01

SKILLS

COLLABORATION, REASONING,
INTERPRETATION, NEGOTIATION

▼ THEMES OF 'THE NECKLACE'

In a small group or pairs, consider the following ideas about the themes of 'The Necklace'.

- 'The story is about fate and its unfairness and uncertainty.'
- 'The story shows us that honesty is always the best policy.'
- 'The story is about vanity and shows that pride comes before a fall.'
- 'The story is about social class and the problems of being born into a poor family.'

Discuss these views with your partner or your group, answering the following questions.

- Which of these statements do you think is the most accurate description of 'The Necklace'? Is the story about anything else?
- Some readers say that, in 'The Necklace', Maupassant is making fun of his characters and that he hates women. Do you agree?

ACTIVITY 2

A04

A05

SKILLS

CRITICAL THINKING, ANALYSIS,
INTERPRETATION, ADAPTIVE
LEARNING, CREATIVITY

▼ WRITING TASK

In the story, Mathilde seems to be trapped by society. To what extent do you think women in today's world are trapped by society? Write an essay explaining your views on this subject.

EXAM-STYLE QUESTION

A01

A02

SKILLS

CRITICAL THINKING,
ANALYSIS, REASONING,
INTERPRETATION

How does the writer try to make the character of Madame Loisel interesting for the reader in 'The Necklace'?

In your answer, you should write about:

- the way she is presented up to the loss of the necklace
- her relationship with her husband up to the loss of the necklace
- the changes after the loss of the necklace
- the use of language.

You should support your answer with close reference to the passage, including brief quotations. (30 marks)