

This exercise is **unassessed and non-compulsory**.

Comment on the following passages, paying detailed critical attention to the way in which they are narrated, but also commenting on any wider issues they raise in relation to the novels of which they are parts. Please submit them to your tutors by **Week 10** of Term 1.

Don't take too long over this exercise. Read the passages carefully and then give yourself about an hour or two to draft and write the essay. Min. 1500 words and Max. 2000 words.

1. They began slowly, then started to move more swiftly. They turned and twisted, and everything about them turned and twisted too, the lamps, the furniture, the panelled walls, the floor – like objects on a pivoted disk. As they passed close to the doors, the lower edge of Emma's dress blew against her partner's trousers: their legs became intertwined. He lowered his glance and looked at her. She raised her eyes to his. A languorous dizziness came over her. She stopped. They started again, and, quickening his pace, the Vicomte swung her away to the far end of the gallery, where, quite out of breath, she all but fell and rested her hand for a moment on his breast. Then, still twirling, but more soberly, he led her back to her place. She stumbled against the wall and put her hand over her eyes. When she opened them again, a lady was sitting on a stool in the middle of the floor with three dancers on their knees before her. She chose the Vicomte, and the music struck up once more. Everybody looked at them. Up and down the room they went, she, keeping her body motionless and her chin lowered, he, in the same posture as before, with back straight, elbows rounded and lips protruded. She certainly knew how to waltz! They continued a long time, out-dancing all the others[....] Emma flung a shawl over her shoulders, opened the window and leaned out. The night was very dark. A few drops of rain were falling. She breathed in the damp air and felt its coolness on her eyes. The music of the ball still echoed in her ears, and she forced herself to stay awake in order to prolong the illusion of that luxurious life which she must leave, so soon, behind her.

2. Mrs. Elton had undoubtedly the advantage, at this time, in vanity completely gratified; for though she had intended to begin with Frank Churchill, she could not lose by the change. Mr. Weston might be his son's superior. ---- In spite of this little rub, however, Emma was smiling with enjoyment, delighted to see the respectable length of the set as it was forming, and to feel that she had so many hours of unusual festivity before her. ---- She was more disturbed by Mr. Knightley's not dancing, than by anything else. ---- There he was, among the standers-by, where he ought not to be; he ought to be dancing, ---- not classing himself with the husbands, and fathers, and whist-players, who were pretending to feel an interest in the dance till their rubbers were made up, ---- so young he looked! ---- He could not have appeared to greater advantage perhaps anywhere, than where he had placed himself. His tall, firm, upright figure, among the bulky forms and stooping shoulders of the elderly men, was such as Emma felt must draw everybody's eyes; and, excepting her own partner, there was not one among the whole row of young men who could be compared with him. ---- He moved a few steps nearer, and those few steps were enough to prove in how gentlemanlike a manner, with what natural grace, he must have danced, would he but take the trouble. ---- Whenever she caught his eye, she forced him to smile; but in general he was looking grave. She wished he could love a ball-room better, and could like Frank Churchill better. He seemed to be often observing her.