

Analysis of the doctor in the house by r.gordon

Profession



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The text under analysis is an extract from the book " Doctor in the house" written by a famous English-speaking writer Richard Gordon by name, who was born in 1921 . Richard Gordon is the pen name used by Gordon Ostlere, an English surgeon and anaesthetist.

Richard Gordon has written numerous novels, screenplays for film and television and accounts of popular history, mostly dealing with the practice of medicine. He is most famous for a long series of comic novels on a medical theme starting with Doctor in the House. Gordon worked as anaesthetist at St. Bartholomew's Hospital and later as a ship's surgeon and as assistant editor of the British Medical Journal.

In 1952, he left medical practice and took up writing full time. The text is devoted to the final examinations at the medical institutions and tells us about the condition of students before, during and after exams. This extract is constructed around the single theme -the procedure of the exams. Therefore, the theme of the text is examination time.

The author uses numerous thematic words, such as: the student, the final examinations, the exams, to prepare, the examiners, cheating, textbooks, to swot up, the written papers, uniformed, examinees, knowledge, tripos, viva, marking, grading, to pass and so on.

Besides the basic theme the text touches upon many very important secondary themes: the psychological types of students, cheating at the exams, students' prejudice, disadvantage of women student at the exams, the psychological pressure of the process of the examination on the students.

The main idea conveyed by the author may be expressed as: the examination is like a lottery (much depends upon luck). The plot structure is closed, because it contains all the components. From the exposition we learn general information about students' attitude to the final examinations and the way of preparation for this important event, the condition of students before, during and after exams.

It begins with the comparison the final exams with death; this image presents the students' attitude to the event. The author gives the description of preparation for the examinations. "To a medical student the final examinations are something like death: an unpleasant inevitability to be faced sooner or later..." The exposition ends with "... and ran a final breathless sprint down the well-trodden paths of medicine."

The main character is medical student R. Gordon. (and the students themselves). Author tells us about him nothing, because he wants to say that Gordon is an ordinary student. Author uses indirect method of characterization, and we can learn something of him only through his feelings. And we see the exams through his own eyes. The story is told from first person narration. The place is a medical university

The time is the examination time

The atmosphere is tense and exciting

The story contains 2 logical parts. The narrator depicts the procedure of the exams which consists of two parts: written papers, after which one of the students gives a very specific theory of the way the tripos is marking at Cambridge; and the viva - the oral examination, before which he

characterizes different types of candidates' behavior anticipating it. The complication of the narration is showing the process of exam, candidates' excitement and suspense of the results.

This part of the text stretches from " The examination began with the written papers" to "" Number three oh six?" the Secretary whispered, without looking up from the book. " R. Gordon?" " Yes" I croaked." The tension reaches its highest degree when poor Gordon almost believe in his fail. And the climax, when the Author describes how the Secretary of the Committee calls out Gordon's name, because in that moment we become interested in his results, do he pass or fail.

" The world stood still. The traffic stopped, the plants ceased growing, men were paralysed, the clouds hung in the air, the winds dropped, the tides disappeared, the sun halted in the sky. " Pass," he muttered." The author deliberately postpones the denouement keeping the reader in pressing anticipation. It comes in the last paragraph, after the moment when he heard the magic word " Pass". It was a kind of liberation and the ending of suffering . " Blindly, like a man just hit by a blackjack, I stumbled upstairs."

This text is narration with elements of dialogues. The style of written prose is formal. The story deals with describing process of exams, difficulties provided by them and students feelings and thoughts before and after examination. The author tries to convey hard emotional state of the medical students in his novel. He manages to do it with the abundant use of stylistic devices.

Similes:

“ To a medical student the final examinations are something like death” “ I was shown to a tiny waiting-room furnished with hard chairs, a wooden table, and windows that wouldn't open, like the condemned cell.” “ The days after the viva were black ones. It was like having a severe accident.” “ The room had suddenly come to a frightening, unexpected silence and stillness, like an unexploded bomb.”

“ he goes at them like a prize-fighter”,

“ porters like the policemen”,

“ the god's brow threatens like imminent thunderstorm”

“ my palms were as wet as sponges”,

“ blindly, like a man just hit by a blackjack”.

The author brilliantly uses the allusion referring to the Bible's Judgment day. We discover that final exams are death and the Secretary as an archangel corresponds where they would go to the paradise or to hell. “ The candidate would step up closely to the Secretary, who would say simply " Pass" or " Failed". Successful men would go upstairs to receive the congratulations and handshakes of the examiners and failures would slink miserably out of the exit to seek the opiate oblivion.”

Metaphor:

‘ a straight contest ’

“ an examination is nothing more than an investigation”

“ the Old Stager, who treated the whole thing with the familiarity of a photographer at a wedding” “ the well-trodden paths”.

Some hyperboles create a great chasm between students and examiners: "But the viva is judgement day. A false answer, and the god's brow threatens like imminent thunderstorm." The other ones reflect the influence of candidate's fears on their health and perception of the world: "But the viva is judgement day. A false answer, and the god's brow threatens like imminent thunderstorm."

The following short parallels constructions help to reflect the tense during anticipation of the narrator's result: "The world stood still. The traffic stopped, the plants ceased growing, men were paralysed, the clouds hung in the air, the winds dropped, the tides disappeared, the sun halted in the sky."

"Whether these people were so brilliant they were able to complete the examination in an hour and a half or whether this was the time required for them to set down unhurriedly their entire knowledge of medicine was never apparent from the nonchalant air with which they left the room."

"The world stood still. The traffic stopped, the plants ceased growing, men were paralysed, the clouds hung in the air, the winds dropped, the tides disappeared, the sun halted in the sky."

Irony:

"Whether these people were so brilliant they were able to complete the examination in an hour and a half or whether this was the time required for them to set down unhurriedly their entire knowledge of medicine was never apparent from the nonchalant air with which they left the room."

Inversion:

" To a medical student the final examinations are something like death" " In the square outside the first person I recognized was Grimsdyke." " Next to him, a man of the Frankly Worried class sat on the edge of his chair tearing little bits off his invitation card and jumping irritatingly every time the door opened. " " Blindly, like a man just hit by a blackjack, I stumbled upstairs." Epithet:

impressionable music

despondently

ticked

flagrant

cheating

looked

dispassionately

down

anonymous

examinees

tiny

waiting

room

came

solemnly

down

the

stairs

restless crowd

Oxymoron:

" There is rarely any frank cheating in medical examinations" " to give the examiners the impression of frustrated brilliance." " Some of them strode up for an extra answer book, with an awkward expression of self-consciousness and superiority in their faces." Repetition:

" Number one hundred and sixty-one," he began. " Number three hundred and two. Number three hundred and six." Grimsdyke punched me hard in the ribs, " Go on," he hissed. " It's you!"

Idioms:

to keep an eye open for
terrible displeasure

Metonymy:

“ The room had suddenly come to a frightening, unexpected silence and stillness, like an unexploded bomb.”

Emotionally coloured verbs:

Gaze, hiss, croak, stumble

Gradation:

“ The world stood still. The traffic stopped, the plants ceased growing, men were paralysed, the clouds hung in the air, the winds dropped, the tides disappeared, the sun halted in the sky.”

This story is rather interesting and attracts the reader's attention. It makes us to experience the psychological state of the students .