



The Quiz



Since 1964, **Ruth Rendell** (who was born in 1930 in London) has written many thrillers and detective stories, most of them best-sellers. *A Judgement in Stone* was brought to the screen by French director Claude Chabrol as *La Cérémonie*.

Word help

1. to read English: *faire des études d'anglais*
2. *blouse de travail*
3. to stumble through [here]: *dire d'une voix hésitante*
4. to flush: *rougir*
5. *cicatrice*
6. *supposition*
7. *planer, rester en suspens*

Eunice has been the Coverdales' maid for some months when this scene occurs. Melinda reads English¹ at University.

The magazine on the table intimidated Eunice as much as a spider might have intimidated another woman. She hoped Melinda would concentrate on it and shut up while she drank her tea which she rather regretted accepting. But it was evident that Melinda intended to concentrate on it only with her participation. She turned
5 the pages, keeping up a running commentary, looking up from time to time with a smile for Eunice and even passing her the magazine for her to look at a picture. [...] 'Here's a questionnaire. "Twenty Questions to Test if You're Really in Love." I must do it, though I know I am. [...] Now, Question One: Would you rather be with him than... Oh, I can see the answers at the bottom, that's no good. I'll tell
10 you what, [...] you ask me the questions. OK?'

'I haven't got my glasses,' said Eunice.

'Yes, you have. They're in your pocket.'

And they were. The tortoise-shell ones, the pair the Coverdales knew as her reading glasses, were sticking out of the right-hand pocket of her overall.²

15 Eunice didn't put them on. She did nothing, for she didn't know what to do. [...] 'Here.' Melinda passed her the magazine. 'Please do. It'll be fun.'

Eunice took it in both hands, and stumbled³ from memory through that first line Melinda had read. 'Would you rather be with him than...' She stopped.

20 Melinda reached across and picked the glasses out of her pocket. Eunice was cornered. A flush⁴ darkened her face to a deep wine colour. She looked up at the girl and her underlip trembled.

'What is it?' [...] Instantly, Melinda jumped to a conclusion. Miss Parchman had reacted rather like this before, when asked what name she would have given her son if she had had one. Obviously there was something in her past that was still
25 painful, and she, very tactlessly, had again touched the scar⁵ of that ancient disappointed love. Poor Miss Parchman, who had once loved someone and was now an old maid. 'I didn't mean to upset you,' she said gently. [...]

Eunice didn't answer. She didn't know what on earth the girl was talking about.

But Melinda took her silence as a sign of unhappiness, and she was seized by a
30 need to do something to make things all right again, to distract Eunice's mind. 'I really am sorry. Let's do the quiz on the opposite page, shall we? [...] You do it for me and see how hopeless I am and then I'll do it for you. I bet you get top marks.'

Melinda held up the glasses for Eunice to take them. [...]

35 But Eunice understood only that she was on the brink of having her disability discovered. She thought Melinda already guessed, and that was why, having mockingly said she was sorry, she was trying to test her out to confirm her assumption.⁶

The glasses, held between Melinda's finger and thumb, hovered⁷ between the two women. Eunice made no move to take them. She was trying to think. What
40 to do, how to get out of it, what desperate measure she could seize on. Puzzled, Melinda let her hand fall, and as she did so, she looked through them from a short distance and saw that they were of plain glass. Her eyes went to Eunice's flushed face, her blank stare, and pieces of the puzzle – the way she never read a book, looked at a paper, left a note, got a letter – fell into place.

45 'Miss Parchman,' she said quietly, 'are you dyslexic?' [...]

'I'm sorry. I mean you *can't* read, can you? You can't read or write.'

A Judgement in stone, RUTH RENDELL, 1977.



OVERVIEW

- 1 Give the two main characters' first names and say what they are respectively doing at the beginning of the scene. (L. 1–6)
- 2 Say why Melinda requires Eunice's help. (L. 7–10)
- 3 Say in one sentence what prevents Eunice from doing what Melinda asks her to (focus on the last 10 lines).

ZOOM IN

- 1 **Melinda**
 - a. Which adjectives best qualify Melinda's attitude? Justify your choice.
considerate – friendly – scornful – cruel – sympathetic – cheeky – aggressive – helpful – indifferent
 - b. List the things she does to bridge the gap between herself and Eunice. Does her strategy succeed?
- 2 **Eunice**
 - a. Show that Eunice does not wish to communicate with Melinda.
 - b. Spot the physical signs that show Eunice's growing uneasiness.
 - c. List the feelings she successively goes through in this scene.
- 3 **Melinda and Eunice**
Compare them in terms of age, abilities, love and family life, social background and behaviour in this scene. What conclusion can you draw from this?
- 4 **Blunders**
 - a. How does Melinda interpret Eunice's silence? (L. 22–33)

- b. What does Melinda blame herself for and how does she try to make up for her blunder?
- c. Explain why Melinda uses the word "dyslexic" (L. 45) rather than "illiterate".

ZOOM OUT

- 1 Knowing that Melinda studies English, what is she likely to do with Eunice? Imagine their conversation after this scene.
- 2 Little by little, Eunice tells Melinda about the difficulties she has to overcome every day and the techniques she resorts to in order to cope with her handicap. Imagine her monologue. (200 words)
- 3 In the first chapter of this book, Ruth Rendell writes: "Literacy is one of the cornerstones of civilization. To be illiterate is to be deformed." To what extent do you agree with this statement?

TRANSLATE

Dans ces phrases, les auxiliaires reprennent un verbe sous-entendu. La traduction littérale étant impossible, trouvez des périphrases adéquates.

- 'I must do it, though I know I am.' (L. 7)
 'Yes, you have. They're in your pocket.' (L. 12)
 'And they were.' (L. 13)
 'Please do. It'll be fun.' (L. 16)
 'Puzzled, Melinda let her hand fall, and as she did so, she looked through them from a short distance and saw that they were of plain glass.' (L. 40)
 'I'm sorry. I mean you *can't* read, can you?' (L. 46)

WATCH YOUR WORDS

Eunice: to admit (to doing sth): *reconnaître, avouer* • a **loophole**: *une excuse, une échappatoire* • to **expose**: *révéler, mettre à nu* > **exposure** • shame: *honte* > to be **ashamed** • a **spinster**: *une célibataire, une vieille fille* • **apprehensive**: *sur la défensive* • **reluctant** to do sth: *réticent à faire qqch* • to have one's back **against** the wall: *avoir le dos au mur* • **sullen**: *renfrogné* • **cheerful**: *gai* • to **pretend**: *faire semblant* • to think up an **excuse**: *inventer une excuse*

Melinda: to **realise**: *se rendre compte* • a **blunder**: *une bourde* • to put one's foot in it: *mettre les pieds dans le plat* • to drop a brick: *jeter un froid* • **chatty** / **talkative**: *bavard(e)* • **sympathy**: *compassion* > to **sympathise** • it dawned on her that ...: *cela lui est venu à l'esprit que...* • to share: *partager* • to bridge a gap: *combler un fossé* • **intimacy**: *l'intimité* • well-read = **cultivated** • a **misunderstanding**

Language watch

Grammarama

Tags

OBSERVATION

► *Let's do the quiz on the opposite page, shall we?* (L. 31)

- 1 Quelle est la catégorie grammaticale de *shall*?
- 2 À quoi sert cette proposition par rapport à la principale :
 - à exprimer une suggestion ?
 - à s'assurer de l'accord de son interlocuteur sur un sujet ?
 - à s'assurer que l'on a bien compris la même chose que son interlocuteur ?
 - à exprimer un ordre ?

3 Traduisez cette phrase en prêtant une attention particulière à la partie en gras.

MISE EN PRATIQUE

- 1 a. Dans les phrases suivantes, analysez la valeur des formes en gras et traduisez ensuite les phrases entières.
 - Pay attention, **will you!**
 - She's done this type of job before, **hasn't she?**
 - They could have thought about it before, **couldn't they?**
 - Let's open a good bottle, **shall we?**
 - I guess I'm late as usual, **aren't I?**
 - Sarah never visited Tupelo, **did she?**
 - You're not mad at me, **are you?**
 - They won't open the shop till 9, **will they?**
- b. Expliquez comment on obtient les *tags* des phrases 1, 2, 5, 6 et 8.
- c. Le *tag* de la quatrième phrase est similaire à celui de la phrase de départ ("*Let's do..., shall we?*"). Sa forme est pratiquement invariable. À quel type de proposition sera-t-il toujours associé ?

► **BACK PACK GRAMMAR p. 211**

- 2 Retrouvez les *tags* pour les propositions suivantes :
 - a. English's rather easy to learn, ...
 - b. You wouldn't call the police, ...
 - c. I'm much too cautious, ...
 - d. Listen up, ...

- e. We needn't hurry, ...
- f. Sam really shouldn't drive so fast, ...

3 Traduisez les phrases ci-dessous en utilisant des *tags*.

- a. Tu n'es pas sérieux, si ?
- b. Ils habitent bien près de l'église, non ?
- c. Ne mets pas de désordre dans le salon, je te prie !
- d. Bon, eh bien allons voir le film de Spielberg, d'accord ?
- e. Elle n'est pas censée lui parler si durement, je me trompe ?
- f. C'est bien moi le plus malin, n'est-ce pas ?

Expression du but

OBSERVATION

- [*She did*] something to make things all right again. (L. 30)
- [*She tested*] her out to confirm her assumption. (L. 36)
- [*She*] held up the glasses for Eunice to take them. (L. 33)
- [*She passed*] her the magazine for her to look at a picture. (L. 6)

- 1 Déterminez, pour chacune de ces phrases du texte, le sujet du verbe introduit par *to*.
- 2 Traduisez ces phrases. Que remarquez-vous au niveau des formes verbales en français ? Comment l'expliquez-vous ?
- 3 Dédouez une règle pour l'expression du but.
- 4 Connaissez-vous d'autres structures pour exprimer le but en anglais ? Peut-on les utiliser dans toutes les phrases ci-dessus ?

MISE EN PRATIQUE

Traduisez les phrases suivantes :

- a. Nous avons appelé pour savoir si tu allais bien.
- b. J'économise pour que tu partes en voyage.
- c. J'économise pour partir en voyage.
- d. Je l'ai appelé de façon à le persuader de venir.
- e. Je suis venu pour que tu changes d'avis.
- f. Il a claqué la porte pour me mettre en colère.

Phonology



Voici une liste de mots du texte contenant la lettre « u ». Choisissez à chaque fois la prononciation de « u » ou de son composé parmi les propositions suivantes ([ʌ], [əʊ], [ɪ], [ʊ], [ɜ:], [u:], [aʊ], [ɔ:], [ɒ], [ju:], [w], ne se prononce pas). Essayez de l'expliquer si possible.

busy • mug • flush • puzzled • put • turned • upset • though • through • thought • obviously • Eunice • guessed • vaguely • question • out

Insight



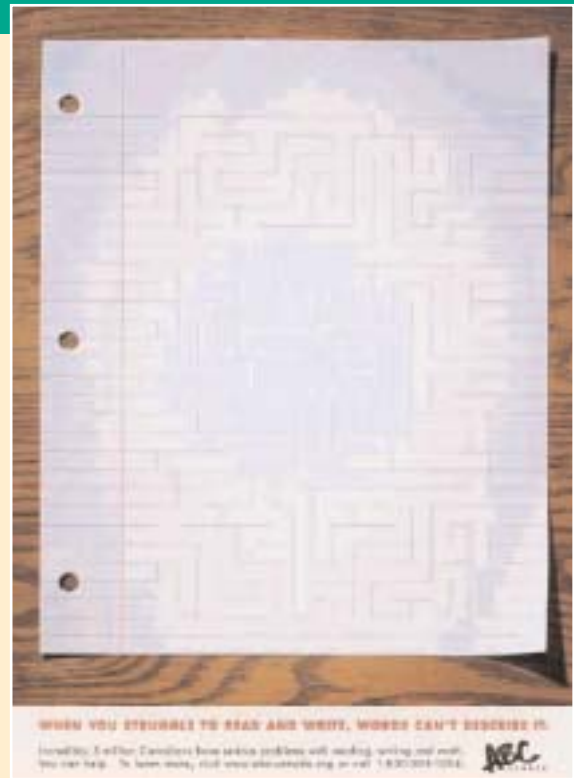
The literacy challenge

WHAT IS LITERACY TODAY? 1

In the past, being literate simply meant mastering the 3 Rs (reading, writing and arithmetic). But it is no longer enough: people now have to be able to actually use these skills in everyday life, at home and in society. As a consequence, being illiterate brings forth more and more difficulties nowadays.

SOME FACTS & FIGURES

- Only 1% of Americans are illiterate, but a 1992 study showed that about 22% of adults were unable to read a food label or a simple story to a child.
- Literacy scores are positively related to people's daily reading, and negatively related to the amount of television they watch ...
- Women make up two thirds of the world's 850 million adult illiterates, but they are gaining access to literacy faster than men.



101 Math solves problems

* You have 9 teenage boys and a few seconds to divide a pizza equally. Too late.

Fig. 4.1

NCC English Canada
For millions of Canadians, math is 2-3 (m). If you need help with everyday math, visit mathforreals.ca or call 1-800-305-3004.

- 1** Describe the ads, then the following questions:
- Who is the advertiser?
 - Do both ads have the same target audience? Read the texts at the bottom.

- 2** Use the documents and your imagination to find the consequences illiteracy may have. Here is a list of keywords to help you:
- health • employment • salary • self-esteem • safety • social assistance • child care (homework, medicine, etc.) • shopping ...

- 3** Find a definition for the following types of literacy and explain why they are important:
- media literacy • computer literacy • map literacy • numeracy • environmental literacy • critical literacy • oral literacy • visual literacy

- 4** Discuss the following statements:
- Going to school is the only way to become literate.
 - The definition of literacy should not be the same in developing countries as in developed countries.

WATCH YOUR WORDS

Literacy & illiterates: to **struggle** to do sth: *avoir du mal à faire qqch* • skills = **abilities** = **capacities** • to drop out of school > a **dropout** • to be rejected = to be a **social outcast** /aʊtkɑːst/: *un exclu* • to be **ashamed** of o.s.: *avoir honte de soi*

Solutions: a **tutor** > to **tutor** sb • a **volunteer** > to **volunteer** • to **support**: *soutenir* • a **literacy programme** • a **public awareness campaign**: *une campagne de sensibilisation*