



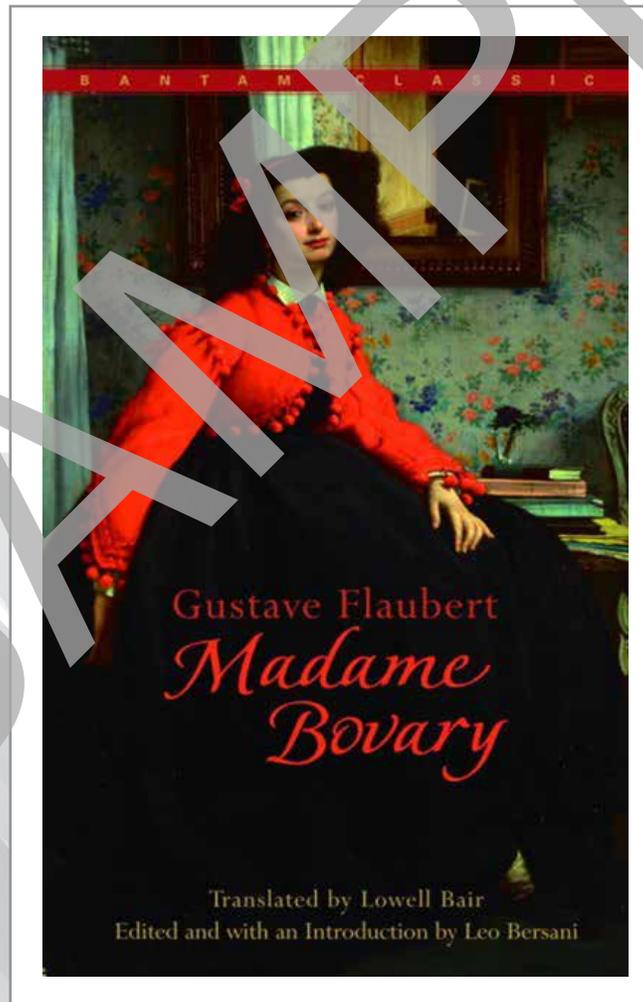
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 9-12

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Madame Bovary

Gustave Flaubert



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Madame Bovary

Gustave Flaubert

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Brainstorming, visualizing,
decision-making

Vocabulary

Sensory, vocabulary words,
context clues

Comprehension

Predicting, comparison/
contrast, causality

Literary Elements

Motif, conflict, story
elements, characterization,
point of view, conflict, irony,
allusion, symbolism,
foreshadowing, and
similes/metaphors

Writing

Reports, narrative, research

Listening/Speaking

Oral reports

Summary

Charles Bovary is the only son of a middle-class family. Although not an exceptional student, he manages to become a doctor and sets up his practice in Tostes, a small rural village in France. His first marriage is to an older woman. After her death, he marries Emma Rouault, an attractive young woman whose fantasies and romantic dreams soon cause her to become bored and disenchanted with her daily life. She becomes ill because of her dissatisfaction.

Because of her deteriorating health, Charles moves her to a new town, Yonville, where their daughter is born. The move fails to cure Emma's unhappiness, however, and she begins to feel romantically drawn to Leon, a young law clerk. After Leon leaves Yonville, Emma's boredom causes her to neglect her husband and her daughter. Charles is unable to please her, and she finds no satisfaction with anything he does.

Rodolphe, a local landowner, finds it easy to woo Emma into an adulterous affair. When he abandons her, she once again becomes quite ill. She recovers, again meets Leon, and they begin an illicit affair which lasts several months. In addition to her infidelity, she begins to spend large amounts of money, never telling her husband of their debts. She manipulates him into signing a Power of Attorney, giving her complete control of their finances.

Emma's increasing decline into debt leads to financial disaster. She faces foreclosure and confiscation of all property. Her despair leads her to both Leon and Rodolphe to ask for financial assistance; however, they both refuse. In desperation, Emma poisons herself and dies a horrible death. A broken, dispirited Charles dies shortly after Emma. Berthe, their child, is left to live in poverty.

About the Author

Gustave Flaubert (floh BAIR) was born on December 12, 1821, in Rouen, France, the fourth child of a surgeon. He attended secondary school in Rouen. He studied law from 1840 to 1843 in Paris. Because of a serious nervous illness, apparently epilepsy, he returned to the family home in Le Croisset, a suburb of Rouen. He spent most of his time there studying and writing. He later became an avid traveler, and his travels are reflected in some of his literary works.

Flaubert had a pessimistic view of life, and he was contemptible of middle-class society. He apparently was bitter because of the contrast between his fantasies and the realism of his life. He never married but did have two distinct relationships with women. He met Elisa Schlessinger when he was only fifteen. She was married and was older than he, yet he idolized her. Their relationship was presumably platonic. Louise Colet, a poetess, was his mistress from 1846 until 1854. They rarely saw each other and conducted their liaison mainly by letters.

Flaubert is most noted for his first novel, *Madame Bovary* (1857), which is considered to be a model of realistic fiction. Because of the content, he and the publisher were sued for "immorality," but they were ultimately acquitted. He died on May 8, 1880.

Other works include *Salamambo* (1862); *Sentimental Education* (1869); *The Temptation of Saint Anthony* (1874); *Three Tales*, which contains three short stories, (1877); *The Candidate* (1874), a play; and *Bouvard and Pechuhet*, published posthumously in 1881.

Character Chart

Describe _____ in the beginning.

Summarize important events in the boxes below. Describe how _____ feels after each one.

Event #1:

_____ feels...

Event #2:

_____ feels...

Event #3:

_____ feels...

Event #4:

_____ feels...

Event #5:

_____ feels...

Event #6:

_____ feels...

Describe _____ at the end.

Section-by-Section Vocabulary, Discussion Questions, and Activities

Part One (1-59)

Summary

Introduces Charles and identifies him as a mediocre, middle-class young man who, through hard work, attains a license to practice medicine. Gives his family background of parental conflict and mother's control. Relates his marriage to Heloise and her subsequent death. Introduces Emma with background to establish her conflict between fantasy and reality. Recounts the marriage of Charles and Emma, her growing disenchantment, her illness, and the decision to move to Yonville.

Vocabulary

melancholy (4)	stoicism (4)	servility (16)	jocular (25)
tilbury (28)	phantasmagoria (32)	antipathetic (34)	propensity (35)
torpor (45)	bourgeois (51)	taciturn (53)	hagrin (54)
capricious (57)	palpitations (58)		

Discussion Questions

1. Describe Charles' first education—his age, his teacher, and the method by which he is taught. (*pp. 5-6, Charles is 12. He is taught by the village priest who gives him short, irregular lessons that accomplish little.*)
2. Why does Charles fail his first examination to qualify to practice medicine? (*p. 8, his irresponsibility causes him to miss class and to party at taverns*)
3. Where does Charles go to practice medicine? (*p. 8, Tostes*)
4. Explain the circumstances of Charles' first marriage. (*p. 9, His mother finds him a wife: an ugly 45-year-old widow, Heloise, with a good income.*)
5. Why is Charles first called to Les Bertaux, home of Monsieur Rouault and why does he continue to go so often to Les Bertaux? (*p. 10, to set Rouault's broken leg.*) (*p. 14, Supposedly, he goes to check on his patient; in reality, he is drawn to Emma.*)
6. How does Heloise lose her money? What happens to her? (*p. 16, The notary who handles her money leaves with all the money. She dies a week later.*)
7. What does M. Rouault think qualifies Charles as a prospective husband for Emma? (*p. 20, He is level-headed, thrifty, well educated, and wouldn't haggle over a dowry.*)

8. In the days following their marriage, contrast Charles and Emma's reactions to their new life. (pp. 29-30, Charles is completely happy and satisfied; Emma decides she isn't really in love and becomes dissatisfied with marriage.)
9. Describe the relationship between Emma and the elder Madame Bovary. (pp. 36-37, Tense—his mother disapproves of the way Emma spends money; she feels that Emma has stolen Charles' affection from her; she resents his happiness.)
10. How does Emma try to experience love for Charles? (p. 37, in the moonlight, she recites passionate verses and sings to him.)
11. Why are Emma and Charles invited to the home of the Marquis d'Andervilliers and what effect does the ball have on Emma? (p. 39, Charles successfully treats him for a boil in his mouth. When Emma does not bow to the Marquis, he considers them to be of the appropriate class.) (p. 48, Emma becomes even more dissatisfied with her life.)
12. What firmly established Charles' reputation as a good doctor? (p. 52, He rides everywhere to care for his patients, prescribes primarily sedatives so he wouldn't harm them, is unpretentious, and stays away from taverns.)
13. Identify some symptoms of Emma's discontent and decline into depression. (pp. 54-58, She is "waiting for something to happen"; has difficulty breathing; feels nothing good would ever happen to her again; abandons her music; discontinues needlework, drawing, and reading; spends more and more time in her room alone; neglects her household duties; no longer cares about her appearance; becomes harder to please; grows pale and has heart palpitations; and continually complains about Tostes.)
14. What does Charles do to try to help Emma? (p. 58, decides to move to Yonville and establish a practice there)
15. **Prediction question:** Will Emma find happiness in Yonville? Why or why not? Will her child bring fulfillment to her life? Refer to pages 15-16 of this guide for help with predictions.

Supplementary Activities

Analysis

1. Discuss whether or not Charles will ever have the ability to rise above his mediocrity (*Part One, ch. 1*). Use the prediction charts at the end of this section to organize points and ideas.
2. Point out Flaubert's art of graphic description, thus making the reader "see" a scene. (*ch. 3, An example is the picture of Rouault's farm as Charles sees it for the first time.*)
3. Analyze the effect Charles' first marriage has on his marriage to Emma. (*Heloise was an ugly, unpleasant, shrewish woman who controlled Charles and made his life difficult. Therefore, he views Emma as so lovely and delightful that he feels she can do no wrong, leading to his naivety in her later indiscretions.*)