

# Study Guide For George Eliot's *The Mill On The Floss*

This comprehensive study guide is an invaluable resource for students studying George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*. With detailed summaries of each chapter, analysis of key themes and characters, and thought-provoking discussion questions, this guide will help you to understand and appreciate this classic work of literature.

## Chapter Summaries

1. **Chapter 1:** Introduces the main characters, Maggie and Tom Tulliver, and their family background. Maggie is a passionate and intelligent girl, while Tom is more practical and cautious. The chapter also foreshadows the tragic events that will occur later in the novel.
2. **Chapter 2:** Maggie and Tom's father, Mr. Tulliver, is a miller who is struggling financially. He is also a harsh and unloving father, which causes Maggie to seek solace in books and learning.
3. **Chapter 3:** Maggie meets Philip Wakem, a sickly and intelligent boy who lives with his father, a lawyer. Maggie and Philip develop a close friendship, but their relationship is threatened by Mr. Tulliver, who is prejudiced against Philip because of his deformity.
4. **Chapter 4:** Maggie and Tom's relationship is tested when Tom is sent away to school. Maggie feels abandoned and alone, and she begins to resent her brother.
5. **Chapter 5:** Maggie's mother, Mrs. Tulliver, dies, and Maggie is sent to live with her aunt and uncle, the Pulletts. Maggie finds life with the

Pullets to be stifling and unfulfilling.

6. **Chapter 6:** Maggie returns home to find that her father has remarried. Her stepmother, Mrs. Glegg, is a cold and unsympathetic woman who makes Maggie's life miserable.
7. **Chapter 7:** Maggie falls in love with Stephen Guest, a charming and wealthy young man. However, Stephen is engaged to Maggie's cousin, Lucy Deane. Maggie's love for Stephen leads to her downfall.
8. **Chapter 8:** Maggie and Stephen run away together, but their affair is short-lived. Stephen abandons Maggie, and she returns home, brokenhearted and pregnant.
9. **Chapter 9:** Maggie gives birth to Stephen's child, but the baby dies shortly after birth. Maggie is overcome with grief and guilt, and she drowns herself in the river.

## Key Themes

- **The power of love:** Love is a major theme throughout the novel. Maggie's love for Philip, Stephen, and her family drives her actions and shapes her destiny.
- **The importance of education:** Maggie is a passionate learner, and her education is essential to her development as a person. However, her education is also a source of conflict, as it sets her apart from her family and community.
- **The role of society:** Society plays a significant role in the novel. Maggie's life is shaped by the expectations and prejudices of her family and community. These expectations and prejudices ultimately lead to her downfall.

- **The nature of good and evil:** Eliot explores the nature of good and evil through the characters of Maggie and Tom. Maggie is a good person who makes mistakes, while Tom is a flawed person who ultimately does the right thing. Eliot suggests that good and evil are not always clear-cut, and that even the best of people are capable of doing bad things.

## Character Analysis

- **Maggie Tulliver:** Maggie is the protagonist of the novel. She is a passionate and intelligent girl who dreams of a life beyond the limitations of her family and community. However, her dreams are ultimately thwarted by society's expectations and prejudices.
- **Tom Tulliver:** Tom is Maggie's older brother. He is a practical and cautious young man who values his family and community above all else. However, Tom is also flawed, and he makes several mistakes that contribute to Maggie's downfall.
- **Philip Wakem:** Philip is a sickly and intelligent boy who becomes Maggie's best friend. Philip is a kind and compassionate person, and he is the only person who truly understands Maggie.
- **Stephen Guest:** Stephen is a charming and wealthy young man who falls in love with Maggie. However, Stephen is also a weak and selfish man, and he ultimately abandons Maggie.
- **Lucy Deane:** Lucy is Maggie's cousin and Stephen's fiancée. Lucy is a kind and gentle young woman, but she is also overshadowed by Maggie's more vibrant personality.

## Discussion Questions

- How does Maggie's character compare to that of her brother, Tom?
- What are the different ways in which society shapes Maggie's life?
- How does Eliot explore the nature of good and evil through the characters of Maggie and Tom?
- What is the significance of the river Floss in the novel?
- How does the novel reflect the social and cultural changes that were taking place in England during the Victorian era?

*The Mill on the Floss* is a complex and moving novel that explores the power of love, the importance of education, the role of society, and the nature of good and evil. Maggie Tulliver is a memorable and tragic character, and her story is one that will stay with readers long after they have finished the book.



## Study Guide for George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* (Course Hero Study Guides) by Mark Jasper

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 1431 KB

Print length : 53 pages

Lending : Enabled

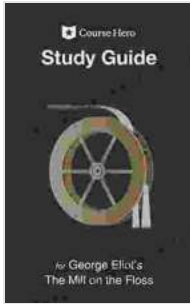
Screen Reader : Supported



## Study Guide for George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* (Course Hero Study Guides) by Mark Jasper

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

Language : English



File size : 1431 KB  
Print length : 53 pages  
Lending : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported



## The Routledge Handbook of Feminist Peace Research: A Comprehensive Guide

The Routledge Handbook of Feminist Peace Research is a groundbreaking and comprehensive collection of essays that examines the intersections of...



## Unveiling the Lyrical Mastery of Henri Cole's "Blizzard Poems"

In the realm of contemporary poetry, Henri Cole's "Blizzard Poems" stands as a testament to the transformative power of language and imagery. Through a...