Emile Study Guide

Emile by Jean-Jacques Rousseau

BOOKRAGS

Contents

Plot Summary

Jean-Jacques Rousseau is now famous as a thinker and writer. His beginnings and his life were fairly humble despite the impression that his present level of prestige might suggest. He was exposed to people of a variety of social classes. Unlike some, it is evident from his need to defend intellectual pursuits and his criticism of them that he spent much time around what are now called "the working classes." The wish for physical activity and the demands of the sedentary lifestyle are actually addressed.

This work is a treatise on education out of the European tradition. The author was a nonconformist to some degree, a fact which influenced his life greatly. He was known to not have been monogamous. He did maintain long-term, stable relationships, at least one that was not a marriage and another that was one. Rousseau suffered persecution but his sexual behavior was not the sole cause of this, his political and perhaps religious ideas being a greater source of trouble.

The book covers a twenty-five year span of time that takes a fictional model babe named Emile into adulthood. When Rousseau writes of "education" he means this in the most complete sense. The work is sweeping in this respect. The man begins with protestations against the use of swaddling clothes, and ends it with the joy that Emile, who is now going to be a father, is going to voluntarily come to him for advice just as his wife with confer with her mother now that she is going to be a married mother.

The author covers much. Despite this, present day readers will not be likely to see why this work was a source of such trouble when it came out in France, leading to Rousseau being actively persecuted and pursued by the law.

Book 1, Book 1 : Chapter 1, Introductions and Nursing

Book 1, Book 1 : Chapter 1, Introductions and Nursing Summary and Analysis

This is a rather large literary work—the main body of text runs over 500 pages. In addition there are a some introductory materials. The entire work has been translated from the French language into English by Barbara Foxley.

There is a set of introductions. The scholar P.D. Jimack gives readers a summary of the entire text. He also provides an account of the author's life.

Rousseau was the son of a craftsman. His mother died as a direct consequence of giving birth. He was raised lovingly and rather gently. When he was old enough he became an apprentice to an engraver, whereas his father was a watch maker. However, the engraver was violent towards Rousseau to such an extent that the teenager ran away from his Master and thereby lost his apprenticeship. Even so, he had to earn a living. He did not have a prominent or stable career but did work. He was also helped, it appears, by a series of women with whom he had long-term romances.

The work that Rousseau shares here, Emile, was an educational, philosophical treatise.

This emerged when the writer was more mature- he was in his 40s when it was produced. The intellectual scene had been greatly influenced by the English philosopher John Locke. In philosophy there is an area called epistemology; this is about "how we know what we know" and "what knowledge is." This is highly relevant as it involves methods for making the distinction between what is false compared to what is true. It is also intended to help discern belief, imagination, ideas and reality. When Rousseau wrote this, the conclusion in European philosophy was that the senses are the basic means for humans to acquire knowledge. Theories, and other philosophers, including the development of the scientific method, all involved themselves in matters of epistemology. Rousseau, coming out of this, strongly advises mothers to focus upon nurturing the physical aspect of their children first because this will improve their abilities to perceive correctly and thereby to obtain knowledge through experience.

Rousseau urges women to feed their own babies, to tend to them and to abandon the use of "swaddling clothes" even though this means that the infant will require a lot more attention than it would if wrapped up. During the introduction, the scholar has explained that in fact, the author had five children, and he forced the mother into giving up every one of them. Even so, he was willing to write a treatise on this topic. In his introduction, he never alludes to his own offspring, but he does confess to readers that he is writing rather than doing. The author addresses the work in its opening to "mothers who think for themselves."

In addition to not getting another woman as nanny nurse for one's own children, Rousseau also advises women to rear their young in the countryside where the air is better. It is important that they be free to run around once they learn to crawl and to speak. Rousseau also recommends loose fitting clothing so as to not inhibit the child's growth.

He believes that lessons should be left until later, so that the child can begin learning from his or her own direct experience prior to getting into book learning. The author focuses on male education. The scholar who has written the introductions warns readers that it is due to the fact that Rousseau was definitely sexist—he felt males were superior to women in general and on the whole. He devotes a shorter section to female education at the end of the book.

Rousseau firmly believes that fathers are the ones who should tutor their children, rather than hiring professionals as stand-ins. Rousseau himself worked as a professional tutor for a year or so for two boys, but it did not go very well. Despite this, during the preliminary part of the treatise, Rousseau tells people that the way he is going to conduct this project is to create a fictive student and tutor relationship. Then he will show through this theoretical model how he feels a boy ought to be raised.

Book 2, Book 2 : Chapter 1, Early Childhood

Book 2, Book 2 : Chapter 1, Early Childhood Summary and Analysis

Here, Rousseau's project became more complex. He has proudly helped the nursing mother to rear and to wean the boy. The child is old enough that the father is able to do a bit more. The tutor is able to do more with Emile. Early on in the chapter there is a story about submission to authority. The reason for this is that he explains that it is vital, when relating to a child, or baby to be responsive while yet retaining authority. Too many small slips and the well-attended baby can be transformed into a little tyrant or despot with too much power—power that it is within a parent's right and duty to retain.

The scholar in the introduction has further explained to readers that Emile succeeded perhaps in part due to the controversy that surrounded it. There was a tradition in Europe at the time that unconventional authors would publish under pseudonyms to protect them from public controversy. Those who published in their own names were faced with the question of whether those who outranked them in society—typically other men or women of "higher classes"—would punish or reward this. Emile became popular. The common people rewarded Rousseau with reputation and financially by buying the book. The public authorities and censors punished him rapidly and with significant force. Rousseau's only solace then became the honor that becomes a man for showing such purity of spirit. However,he was perceived as being disobedient to the rulers of France.

Rousseau begins this section by encouraging plenty of fresh air and physical activity. Next, he talks about the importance of reducing the fear of hurt by allowing children to cope with minor problems while receiving a neutral response from elders. Rousseau means this a "moderate approach" for a specific purpose. This way, a child will not play up any suffering into dramas, and will develop confidence. What Rousseau does not mention is that the real cure to exaggeration amongst children is to be sure to pay attention to them when there is nothing wrong instead of only when there is a problem. To neglect them or their injuries does them no service, if there is nothing but a very simple fall or minor scrape it might be better service to the child to let him see that he is going to be okay without neurotic adult interference.

The author goes on to some discussion of discipline. A happy child is good, but a spoilt one, he writes, is bad. Such a gay, merry youth will be robust but still the educator must ask: when and how to apply discipline? The author reveals his time and culture when he tells readers that only half of those born will even reach adulthood. Hence, best to view childhood as a time in itself rather than solely as a means to the end of manhood. Even so, such rebukes or other punishments only have value if they will serve to protect the child from trouble as an adult without causing them to be overcautious. How to judge

what will be effective, Rousseau admits, can be challenging. Here the temperaments and patience of both care-giving adult and that of the child are highly relevant.

Rousseau posits the first description of happiness as a life where there is greater pleasure than there is pain. He flouts stereotypical views of good and evil. He asserts that there is nothing evil in the childhood. This last remark, according to the P.D. Jimack's introduction, indicates part of what made this work so controversial. Rousseau actually claims that mankind is born good, and that childrearing and then the adult life is all about protecting this from the corruption that could turn it into evil.

Freedom is the ideal and the best that any man can hope to actually achieve. Rousseau explains that the ability to do this can be cultivated during childhood with the right kind of upbringing. At the same time, he refers greatly to an overwhelming force or sources of sorrow and to the defeated and sad state into which many of the old people fall. The institutions of civilization, he complains, are largely to blame.

Book 2, Book 2 : Chapter 2, Submission

Book 2, Book 2 : Chapter 2, Submission Summary and Analysis

The entire treatise of Emile is divided into books by the author rather than into chapters.

The general trend in the book summary is for each chapter to cover approximately 50 pages of the original text. The edition used to create this summary is the Everyman publication, with Barbara Hoxley's translation from French into English. Those using the summary should be aware that in the event of pagination variance, they can follow the above as a basic guideline.

The author has revealed more of his personal beliefs and views on education and the "Emile" has moved into his childhood. It now clear that Rousseau's philosophical underpinnings and his attitudes and beliefs about society feed into his recommendations for how to educate the child. Remember that he has written, "it is the conflict between the needs and desires for personal freedom and the sacrificial conforming demand that the individual must put the common good and community above himself" that is the source of inner conflict. The idea perfection, the author advocates, is to effectively do away with the inner conflicts. Proper education of Emile, it is hoped, will help to do this.

The author showed at the very end of the previous section how to use a bit of strategy to obtain the submission of the boy Emile. It required some resistance to the child's will, along with other efforts to gently hold him back without harming him.

The next section includes a reaction on Rousseau's part to scholars. He contrasts book learning with hands-on experience and observes that the trouble with books is that they can lead one to false belief as readily as they can supply minds with greater knowledge of the truth. He writes as though infected with anti-intellectual sentiment. however, He also write of the motivational power of interest. He describes how, when a child is motivated by the desire to know how to read he will learn by any method tried, whereas trying to get an unmotivated person to learn anything is much harder.

Rousseau also explains that it is possible to manipulate the student, at least to some degree. To do so, without being cruel, can take a little cleverness. The main example the author uses is that of putting notes around for the child. Through doing so, the author means to nurture, or to manipulate the boy Emile into developing a wish to learn to read. It takes some time, but the inducement works and since the boy learns this because he wants to, it is easier going than it would be otherwise.

Early in the section, the author directly addresses the audience, but this time he writes to the Gentlemen rather than to the mothers whom he referred to in the beginning. Here he makes the important point that he wants Emile to learn ignorance. What he means is

not that he wishes to constrain the boy to ignorance, but rather to educate him to be clear on the difference between not knowing and making self-delusional grasps at knowledge from the improper use of the mind.

The author gives intellectual context to readers here. He refers directly to Locke, and to Rollin, Fleury and De Crouzas. He cites that despite many differences of opinion , they agree on the need for physical activity. The reasons for this only increase as the treatise progresses. Strength, vigor against the threats in life, ability to perceive acutely and correctly are all reasons cited by author.

Later in the chapter there is exposition about the different modes of bodily training to suit the needs of the sedentary lifestyle and the highly active lifestyle. The needs and training are quite divergent. The author does not describe anything pertaining to people who are conflicted over the two or who wish to live a life of moderation between them.

Book 3, Book 3 : Chapter 1, Book 3

Book 3, Book 3 : Chapter 1, Book 3 Summary and Analysis

This book is shorter than the others. For that reason, it has only one chapter in the summary devoted to it. Here Rousseau begins to address adolescents, covering both puberty and adolescence.

Weakness and strength are meaningful, and they are the author's focus at this time. Rousseau elucidates to readers how the education is intended to permit the child to grow well into life with a clear perception of his own limitations. The author writes that because the child is not yet "effected" or "afflicted" by sexual feelings and desires, there is a level of development and reasoning which has reached a peak.

Rousseau follows the customary but distorted view that children are weak. This is obvious during their early years but is only true in their relation to adults and to other larger creatures. Human young, especially when they do get the exercise that Rousseau urges parents to ensure that they have, are anything but weak with respect to creatures of their ow size and proportion. Rousseau means, however, that during this new stage of his life, while a child is still working within the limits of his range and mode, he is able to develop far greater strength. This strength is physical. It is also, the author indicates, something more than that. It is the ability to extend beyond previous limits: to do everything that he means to do, and find that he has something left over that would enable him to do more. This condition is rooted in two forces: one is the ability to perform to a certain level with respect to taking responsible actions. The other is that Emile has been educated to think a certain way. That means that Emile has not been plagued by wanting what has been kept from his grasp the way that readers were probably raised to do. Due to that, now Emile can do what is within his reach and finds at the end of the day "I have more."

Rousseau shares more of his ideas with the readers. He both extols the virtue of the teenager, who is growing in great bodily strength and in the use of reason. At the same time, the passions are brand new and there is humility in the lifestyle—these are dependent, and largely compliant entities. However, many of their newfound powers cause them to chaff against constraints at a time when they really desire guidance into more responsibility—rather than being abandoned to freedom without mentors at this stage of their lives. The author urges readers to see ignorance. Refrain from making judgments when you really do not know, he advises, and bearing your ignorance you will be spared from tremendous errors. This is not meant to make people unthinking but simply to make them able to perceive accurately, and not like people who weave fiction with their minds to fill in for ignorance of the truth. Rumor and gossip exemplify the kind of thing that he is urging people to avoid.

Book 4, Book 4 : Chapter 1, Manhood

Book 4, Book 4 : Chapter 1, Manhood Summary and Analysis

The author begins this new stage of life with a kind of energetic lamentation. He observes how much strife and sorrow there is in the world. There is great sadness. Rousseau complains that the first 25 years of life come and go so swiftly, and that, by the time a man has matured to the point that he knows better how to use his time, that stage of life has passed and he can no longer be that way. This is the opening threshold to manhood on the very first page of this chapter.

The second birth, the birth of the man, is described by the author. There are strange changes to the facial hair. He cites bizarre alterations in the ability to speak; the adolescent is some kind of half-boy, half-man creature with a cracking voice. His hormonal flushes change drastically the way he feels the effects of women.

The author differentiates between self-love and selfishness. Self-love, he informs readers, is entirely healthy and natural. This is rooted in an entity's self-awareness and natural affection for itself as a living person. One ought never to be rid of this, the author urges. Selfishness on the other hand, is a beast. It is rooted in some kind of error, based upon comparison of oneself to another, or to others. Self-love is well disposed towards itself and others. Selfishness, however, cannot ever be satisfied because it wants others to prefer him to themselves which does not make healthy sense. After explicating to readers at some length the trials and tribulations explicitly contained in and implied by the combined forces of selfishness and the way that it is sown often enough by an individual's passions, the author indicates that this is our next focal point of education: we must pay heed and train Emile a certain way, so as to guide him through such tumultuous waters.

Rousseau addresses the matter of communicating about delicate topics. He asserts the need for honesty with respect to Emile, the student. He warns that for the man who lies to his student, all of his education is lost the moment the student learns of the deception. He then goes on to address such a sensitive concern as how to answer Emile's question about where babies come from without describing sexual activity, or even mentioning it, but also without being deceitful. This is one of a handful of topics which Rousseau admits are areas of life where being honest with the children without revealing inappropriate information is a challenge, but one that Rousseau feels is worth meeting. The author suggests telling the child part of the truth: explain that babies come from women's bodies, with difficulty for the woman.

The author asserts that he intends to raise Emile in a way that Emile will actually be happy. The author moves, over the course of 30 pages or so, to show the adventures and misadventures of the grown young man. He cites libertinism, and the pains that emerge from being attractive to women. The trouble is not, he declares, the attractions;

it is being hounded into action before love has been cultivated. He writes both of this, and that in the end, that even in victory there is always the insecurity associated with a woman who may find another man, and that the competition in this regard seems endless. He contrasts it with those who timidly moved along the path of love and only found themselves naked in bed with this one love- this spouse. He honors the innocence of it. Thus, Rousseau shares that he has come from a more liberal or libertine subculture in France. Even so, he asserts, Emile can rescue himself from this. He shows how the young man passes through poverty and the next chapter begins with the introduction of a priest.

Book 4, Book 4 : Chapter 2, The Creed of a Savoyard Priest

Book 4, Book 4 : Chapter 2, The Creed of a Savoyard Priest Summary and Analysis

This section is devoted entirely to a subject of great importance. The author dedicates it to questions of philosophy and religion. The priest is the one giving the discourse. In truth he fell out of the priesthood and into what he describes as one of the most disturbing periods of his life. He had lost something. It might not be what one would have expected him to have lost: it was his certainty.

The story unfolds: this priest was actually one because his parents, both poor, had viewed it as a way for him to be upwardly mobile. He reports that he obediently followed the instructions for how to do become a priest and did. He discovered that his admiration of the marital condition led to the downfall of his position as a priest.

The clergyman then passed through a long period of speculation and doubt. He felt dislodged from his entire religion, he explains, because he had one idea that no longer fit and since the whole thing was a unit, he felt compelled to give up his religion. His inquiry continued; he felt that he was plagued and severely saddened by the ignorance that had reared its head. Frustrated, afraid, he dared to continue to think, hoping for answers. He explored the works of philosophers and mostly found that they were exceptional when it came to arguing amongst themselves, and on this one point he agreed with them entirely.

The discourse ends with a rather unexpected turn. He urges every reader, and Emile, to return to the religion in which he was raised. He declares that his conclusion is simply that apostasy—changing religions—does not work. Return to your childhood religion, he urges. There is a difference, however. He prompts Emile to take it up again but with the whole heart, rather than only part of it. This he does not say based upon what the religion is, but only that for some reason there is this principle. Any errors, he suggests, that sowed the alienation from it, can be somehow be mended. This reconciliation is as good as that between family members who had grown estranged.

Through this section, the author has surveyed both philosophy and religion. He has given sympathy to every man who has experienced any aspects of the troubles that he shares in these pages. The end is a strange piece of advice; doubtless it is a controversial one. Today, apostasy, or changing one's religion is a difficult subject. Some convert, others think it is a dreadful error to do so for anyone. Some feel that a woman ought to do so when she marries if her husband if of another religion; others feel that if one spouse is more committed to her or his religion that the other should be flexible and conform to the other. Finally, there are those who change their religions and those who do not: the priest means to suggest that the reasons that one fled from one's religion

may be can be reconciled and perhaps submission to those views and rules are necessary.

Book 4, Book 4 : Chapter 3, Managing the Sexual Desires

Book 4, Book 4 : Chapter 3, Managing the Sexual Desires Summary and Analysis

The discourse from the preceding summary chapter continues. There is a reminder to Emile to be humble and honest. Few things will serve him in such good stead as these simple yet powerful principles. The discussion ends, and the mode shifts so that the exposition is once again coming from Rousseau as himself with respect to being Emile's tutor.

During this final third of the fourth book, the author addresses the reality of Emile's emerging sexuality and the related desires. It is worth noting Rousseau's culture and personal experience was more libertine and in this respect readers of today may find that he comes out of cultural condition which may be surprisingly familiar, at least to some. It is also worth reminding readers that the book's writer is a man in his 40s. He had already had at least 2 important long term relationships by the time he found a publisher for this work. He had also given up 5 of his own offspring for adoption. What follows is what comes off as a somewhat conservative view of marriage and sex, but this has come as hard won knowledge rather than from an ideology based merely in the words of his elders. Rousseau says that Emile must be married sooner rather than later as that is the wisest means for acting upon the passions in society, with the greatest protection and potential for healthy love for both man and woman and the well being of children. Then he goes on to admit that premature marriage is not such a good thing and so there must an effort to find some kind of balance. The recommendation is that Emile remain a virgin and that the culture support this strongly. He cites the Germans as having set rather a better example of keeping men virgins longer when they delay marriage, as a culture. He sets the age for marriage at 20, so as to be either too late nor too soon.

The author supplies a few anecdotes about how the state of virginity can be prolonged, in some cases out to over thirty years amongst people who do marry. Rousseau does not discuss the fact that there have been women and men both who in fact remained virgins their whole lives. An early marriage after the teenage years is the best advice that the French man gives for his student.

The subject matter then changes. The matter of religion remerges. Here, the author has also been definitive. He will encourage Emile to practice what he refers to as "natural religion." This exhibits some faith in the world to inspire long standing religious sentiments and real feelings. He also rejects the idea of his student being trapped by any kind of "excessive" or hampering dogmas. The fact is that the author who advises this for Emile was a converted Catholic who had had many friends of other religions, and agnostics and atheists as well.

Then Rousseau explains how helpful it is to see to it that Emile receives education in a trade. Once this is done, he goes on to write about other skills to be added.

Meanwhile, the author notes the need to make sure that the young man is worked enough to be made tired. He admits that this must be done if Emile is to be in a state of mind in which he will be receptive to what his tutor has to say, particularly regarding more sensitive topics. He claims that it is best to not divide desire. Rousseau describes the difference between covering the same terrain with a man who's mind is turned to hunting, compared to one who's mind is turned to romancing. They are quite distinctive in their quality.

Then he resumes a discussion of leading Emile into society. In this case, he immediately means to have Emile married to a woman. This will mean his entrance into society because it hinges upon relating to his fellow man.

The mistress, the wife that Emile is seeking, is also provided by the author on the same level as Emile—she is a fictive composite named Sophy.

The chapter concludes after the author provides some discussion of that sorry process of corruption. He discusses the vices offered to young men when they leave the protective atmospheres of their father's homes. Rousseau has hoped that all his work with Emile will not be ruined by these others, who may be closer to his age. Often enough they may attack his loyalty and obedience to those who have guarded him, and attempt to take evil advantage of his wish for company and to be cared for. The author has explained that while it is excellent that children are often protected by healthy relationships with others, once they leave home this may change. Rousseau has also made some effort to show through Emile, what techniques can be used to help to keep the younger one's ear and to prepare him to escape being led astray. The conclusion is simply that it is an easier and superior thing to avoid vice in the first place but it is preferable to escape it, or to conquer it later, rather than succumbing to it for life.

Book 5, Book 5 : Chapter 1, Sophy

Book 5, Book 5 : Chapter 1, Sophy Summary and Analysis

This chapter is the first of three artificial subdivisions of what in the original translation is simply "Book 5." At the tail end of the preceding chapter, readers were shown the grave dangers of the corruption of young grown men when they leave home and how this is typically done through an abuse of the youth's desires to have friends, by undermining the young man's ties to his parents and trustworthy guides, and by his relatively unprotected position.

The author has gone to great lengths to create some form of education that will help the young man to resist at least some of this. Part of this is to cultivate in Emile's mind the image of Sophy—or the woman he really loves.

Readers would do well to be warned that the presentation of Sophy is limited by Rousseau's specific goals and points of relative interest.

Rousseau rapidly informs readers in the very beginning of this chapter that he is well aware of the conflict between the sexes (here meaning biologically rooted gender) with regards to whether one is superior to the other or whether they are equal. He cites that the over all situation is a bit peculiar despite its dailiness: women and men are both very much alike and extraordinarily different from each other. He suspects that the differences are caused by the gender differences but also admits that how and why that is so may well be true but not readily apparent. He posits that the gender and sexual difference is evidently a complementary set of differences, whereas the common humanity yields so much that is alike in operation.

Rousseau declares that for men, to be strong and active is the rule. For women, to arouse this energy in men and put it to use is good and proper. The challenge for women is that compliant nonresistance and submission due to man's greater physical power intermingles with the rightness of encouraging or stirring up man's power. The author does cite the passions and acknowledges that the difference in the implications for women and men of following through on those desires makes sense and is influential for good reason. Finally, he reports that man's needs make him dependent upon the weaker sex and thereby interdependence is established.

Rousseau then goes on to express that much of the difference in duties and activities between men and women is not so much a conspiracy against women as it is a direct consequence of nature. it is cruel and unjust, he admits, whenever a father or husband fails to ensure the safety of a woman to have and to rear offspring given how it interferes with her working. The other side of the argument, Rousseau declares, is anxiety about paternity. A woman always knows that a child is her own, but what security has a man that the woman was only with him? He reveals a personal view

when he declares that the most treasonous action a woman can make is to bring another man's baby into a marriage merely masquerading it as his. The author declares, what could be worse for a man and his baby, to hold it and to wonder—is this really my offspring?

Rousseau makes at least one remark that readers may find offensive. He claims that the idea of sharing out the professions evenly amongst women and men actually degrades women. As women, women do better to be women. The value and rank of a woman is higher as such, thanwhen she is turned into a low grade imitation man; a lesser version of the male. For this reason, he claims, women do themselves a disservice when they deny or neglect their maternal duties and anything that lowers the quality of their motherhood amounts to some kind of failure. This being said, he goes on to claim that this reality causes women to be more dependent upon men for fulfilling their role as mothers- this is simply reality and it is not caused by some 'fault'.

The relations of man and wife are rooted in the power of gentleness. The tolerance by women of men's injustice does not excuse the man's wrong behavior. The forbearance and the gentleness of the women, Rousseau explains, are the power that will win out. He urges women to be released from or to abandon bitterness and obstinance and reminds them that their gentleness is at least as effective as stream water slowly smoothing a stone.

Rousseau describes the male and female purpose. The man's purpose is to serve, he tells readers simply, the woman's is to please. Later in the chapter, Rousseau assures readers that he has visited homes where both the man and the woman are equally educated and in many ways relate "equitably." He then discusses "flirts." and here uses the term "lover" to indicate all the men who are hanging around out of sexual interest, preferably also marital, love interest. Rousseau explains that the expert flirt will somehow succeed in giving each of them the subjective sensation that he is her favorite and that she will be able to do this publicly, with the others present.

Book 5, Book 5 : Chapter 2, Sophy Cont.

Book 5, Book 5 : Chapter 2, Sophy Cont. Summary and Analysis

Here, the author has switched back from a more generalized discourse into the use of a theoretical model. Having espoused the proper behavior of married women, which includes staving off excessive temptations whether in the form of other men or some other vice, he has turned back to the education of the maiden. Sophy is a good daughter long before she has grown into Emile's ideal wife.

Sophy is good with her hands and skillful. As a daughter she is encouraged to cultivate those talents and attitudes that will lend themselves to being a high quality mother later on. In many cases this happens with dolls, but it is also found in being the mother's assistant. Rousseau has begun listing the various skills she learns. He harbors some wish that she learn only what will be of practical service and value. Rousseau means that it is more important to tend to the children actually. So, it is more important that Sophy know how much to get the best food and to apportion it for the size of the family. She should learn such facts as these, he said, and everyone should respect it when she does.

Rousseau describes Sophy's parents introducing preparations for marriage when she is 15 years old. They explain that there are 3 forces involved, and that she and the young man must determine if they are naturally suited to one another. The parents must be entrusted to see that social status and conventions are upheld. They then recount what brought them together and tell of another enticing fact of love. Their original reasons for marrying each other are long gone when they discuss Sophy's marriage. The father tells her that the natural truth of the love between her parents has sustained them despite the loss of so much else. Those first reasons are no longer needed; their love is real and a source of great joy.

Later, Rousseau resumes his work with Emile. He aims to unite the heart and mind of Emile with that of Sophy. He wants to create the right sense for a good young woman of the proper sort to be his wife. He urges Emile to respect the different virtues that men and women harbor and to accept that nature is the true source of why men are one way and women are the other. He fosters restraint in Emile. He warns that while a man makes his own honor, for women, what other people think and the state of her reputation really do matter. Mutual affection is of course, the first formed and needed emotion in both parties for their to be any hope of success.

Foxley has translated a word "lover" from the French. In this context, it means that the two are being permitted chaperoned, private social contact. Generally, Sophy would not even take Emile's arm and nothing further would be permitted or tolerated by the guiding mentors. The two are only around one another because of their seeking marriage. For this reason, the two are called lovers although much of what a large

portion of contemporary readers would associate with such a term absolutely will not happen unless the two agree to wed, and even then, not until they do.

The remainder of this chapter is a continuance of the courtship between Emile and Sophy. Emile is a wealthy young man for whom Sophy is acceptable although she is poor. The two become so sensitive to one another that in ordinary language the term "hypersensitive" seems closer to the truth. Sophy is defensive in that way that every healthy young lady is—warned, one hopes, that great wisdom tends to thwart the advances of ardent young men. The main reason is that the risks are far greater for the young lady and the men tend to suffer from not thinking about the implications and consequences of their behavior until after-the-fact by which time it is too late. Sophy, therefore, fends off Emile, despite her desires, for the sake of sanity.

Book 5, Book 5 : Chapter 3, Emile Grows More Mature

Book 5, Book 5 : Chapter 3, Emile Grows More Mature Summary and Analysis

Emile has become impassioned and ardent regarding Sophy. They have known one another for five months and now he wants to marry her. At this time his mentor informs him that Emile needs to go apart from her and make himself worthy of her as a husband. This is not so much meant to just cruelly dislodge them from each other but is because she needs a suitable established man upon whom she can depend, with whom it is safe to have children and so on. Emile is not pleased when the older recommends that he just go away from her until he has better prepared himself.

Emile cries when the time comes to actually separate so that he can become worthy, then return to marry Sophy. This does not mean that will not marry one another, it means that they will.

The next section has its own heading: On Travel. Almost immediately, the author refers to the problem of books. Reading, he remarks, can be a source of great learning but it can also be turned into its own opposite. He calls the results "a pretentious ignoramus." He tells readers that he believes that there is more reading going on during his lifetime than there ever has been before in the history of mankind and this may indeed be the source of the trouble.

The author makes a clean break from the previous topic and picks up a new one. Here he makes a survey of various ways of traveling and of their purpose and use. He describes the differing characters of entire nations, which can be gleaned from a study of sufficient numbers of their members.

Then he comments on change. The people who have not traveled have a connection to the territory upon which they reside which goes deeper into their past, farther into their time. Then he tells readers about how the peoples of nations have been transformed by their breeding and by migrations over the centuries. After criticizing travel, he relents that travel for the purpose of learning can be quite valuable, although he advises that one study one's fellow man first. Only after that might travel be helpful. He informs readers that Emile will travel for the purposes of education.

The narrator explains that Emile is approaching the age where he will be released into his own hands rather than living under the protection of his mentor and father. The two confer, and devise a plan so that within two years and much exploration, Emile will have surveyed several lands, devised a method of gainful employment or farming so that he can support himself, his wife and their children and that done, will return and marry

Sophy. Deep in the recesses of his mind, he hopes that when he comes back for her she is still available and still wants him.

Rousseau then describes forms of government. He provides definitions and readers would do well to compare them to today's dictionaries and to those definitions off the same types of government supplied by Aristotle. Democracy, Rousseau says, is when there are more magistrates than there are citizens. Aristotle called democracy "rule by the poor."

A main issue at this point in the book is that the increase in population has directly impacted the system of government. The greater numbers have caused a more profound need for control, and Rousseau is looking at ways this may be achieved.

The book concludes with Emile giving an account of his view of what he has been taught and his present interpretation of it. This comes while he is in his 20s, after having traveled without his lover, but rather with his tutor and acquiring additional languages and the like. Emile takes up a small set of contradictions, or sources of intense inner tension. He shows that he sees that to be less dependent upon other men and civil society means only that he will be more directly in need of nature. He declares that he will not reject his financial wealth and that he will work free of it so that it does not bind his freedom and development. Here he refers to his father, and tells him that his wealth permits him to live wherever he likes. He is somewhat dismissive of the whole idea of "knowing his place" in society and yet what it is shows rather clearly.

The father gives some advice. He sets it forth as a fact that men tend to be less constant than women in sexual love and because of that women suffer the greater anxiety and jealousy in general than men do, particularly as their needs often make them more dependent upon men. Rousseau urges them to remain lovers and warns against the rapid cooling of the men whose love is driven more by the passion of satiation and novelty than by a deepening, maturing love. For this reason, the most successful wife is in some respects simply the one able to repeatedly seduce her lover for decades in a row rather than losing him to the seductions of other women. Rousseau reminds them that their physical and sexual affections must be limited to one another and to their free wills, so that neither is slave to the other in this regard. He supports the idea that they act from love more so than from duty and suggests that he himself is not entirely certain how tender affections and a sense of duty can be united.

The book ends when Emile returns to his father a few months after he has married to share the news that he is going to be a father. Emile assures his mentor that he will teach the child himself. He also admits that his own Master would be the best substitute and it is Emile's intention to come to him frequently for advise.

Emile has risen from the cradle into fatherhood. This is the cycle of life. He has been guided each step of the way, by a wise, trustworthy guide. Such is the hope of every man, to be so well endowed with such reliable assistance. For some this is a reality, for others not. Sophy, meanwhile has found that her own mother is as helpful in the same manner for women as the mentor has been for Emile, and like Emile returns to his

father, Sophy returns frequently to her mother for assistance in meeting this new stage of life.

Characters

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

This is the book's author. He was a Swiss born man from the middle class; his father was the sole working parent, a watchmaker.

He had a kind and gentle childhood, despite the loss of his mother almost immediately after his birth. Sadly, however, once a teen he was apprenticed to a violent Master. This contributed to the development of some personal vices on the part of the apprentice. This also provided some impetus to change: in fact, it was so bad that he ran away from his professional training to get away from the abuse.

There is an introduction about him at the front of the book, provided by a professional scholar.

Barbara Foxley

This woman is the translator (from the French). Any of her biases in the translation are not readily apparent. Sufficient scholarship and research would enable one to discern her influence upon the English form.

Readers are advised to check their editions. The one used for the summary is the Everyman. The translation first appeared in 1911 and was reproduced and distributed in 1993.

P. D. Jimack

This is a scholar who taught French at the University of Stirling in Scotland when the edition used was published in 1993.

This gentleman has produced an introductory piece to go with the work. While this is handy for every reader, it transforms the book into one especially well prepared to serve as a university textbook.

Grotius

This man is named as an ancient hero. He comes up more than once but not often. His name first appears in the second half of the book.

Plato

This is the ancient Grecian philosopher of Athens. Rousseau refers to his work The Republic and insists to readers that it is more a book on public education than one of politics. He refers to the philosopher a few other times as well, regarding the difference between proper education for females and males. He says that under certain conditions females should have identical educations as males. Rousseau says that to masculinize women is to degrade them. Every woman has more value as a woman than she could ever have as an imitation man.

Emile

This is the fictive protagonist of the work, a theoretical model that Rousseau can use to demonstrate his ideas.

Sophy

Sophy is also fictional, and is used as a theoretical model for young women in relation to Emile. She appears in the last book of the treatise.

Atalanta

This was a Grecian female champion. She is referred to near the end of the treatise as part of Emile's efforts to acquire a wife and thereby to become a husband. She was a runner and there is a special story about her that is not recounted in the treatise.

God

This being is clearly referred to in numerous places throughout the entire work. Typically this comes up with respect to His role as Creator and beneficent dominant force in the cosmos, especially in relation to humanity.

Master

This term is used to apply to more than one person during the book. As with God and king, it is meant to indicate a level of dominance over another.

An experienced professional in a craft, and Emile's father & tutor are all called Master in the book.

Mistress

This is simply the feminine form of a Master. Its usage is somewhat different but not in every way. A woman who is not a man's wife is often referred to by Rousseau as a mistress, especially if they have romantic ties of some kind.

It should be understood that this is not the only usage, but this is how it appears in Emile. In this context, it is also worth noting that the mistress does not indicate the woman lover of a man who is married to an entirely different woman.

Rousseau describes Sophy at the beginning of their marriage as his mistress, who will soften with time into being his wife and friend as long as she does not lose him to his own inconstancy.

Child

This refers to a portion of the text in the second book where there is a dialog between "Master & Child."

John Locke

This is the English philosopher. His writings and thought had grown prominent in Europe. They directly influenced the development of Rousseau's thought, including the work Emile. The philosopher is referred to a number of times throughout the five books of the treatise.

Voltaire

This French literary figure is mentioned in the introduction and again early in the book by Rousseau. His fiction novels were famous in his home nation. He was somewhat scandalous yet became overwhelmingly popular despite this. The main value of his being mentioned is to contextualize Rousseau's thought. The two men were contemporaries from the same culture: France in the 1700s.

Objects/Places

Geneva, Switzerland

This is the birthplace of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Paris

This is the capital of France. Rousseau lived there during a substantial portion of his life.

England

This was the home of the philosopher John Locke, and is the nation to which Rousseau fled, to be sheltered by David Hume, when he was persecuted in France as a direct consequence for having Emile published and marketed publicly in France.

swaddling clothes

These come up at the beginning of the first book. They are discussed in relation to reforms that the author is proposing about the care of infants. They are strips of cloth that are used to tightly wrap a baby. Rousseau argues against their use, claiming that they harm the child for the convenience of the carer.

prince

This is a role, and as such not an object in any ordinary sense. The author claims that if he tutored the child, the boy would abdicate his throne and refuse to be a prince, or at least, never be a king.

Cathedral of Saint Mark

This is a Christian cathedral. It comes up in book 1 as part of a discussion of how different people react to things and events. It is located in Venice, Italy.

philosophers

Rousseau has found his own place amongst the academic philosophers. If nothing else, it becomes clear between the front and back of the treatise, that Rousseau has heard of a number of these and may well have read many. Aristotle & Plato from Athens 350BC, John Locke & David Hume from Britain in 1700-1750 AC, are amongst those referred to by the author.

These are people who dedicate a great deal of energy to divining the meaning of life, how the universe works, whether or not there is a God or gods, how knowledge can be discovered or remembered, and other answers and questions that many people do not want to have to think about.

loose fitting attire

In Emile, the value of loose fitting attire comes up repeatedly. It aids in the development of children and encourages strength in adults, especially the more active kind. First mentioned in the treatise during the discussion on infants, it reappears at later stages.

tutor

A tutor is a teacher. In Emile, a boy's tutor, according to Rousseau ought to be his father. Rousseau was in fact educated by his own father, until his apprenticeship. This role is vital and central to the entire treatise. As such, it is mentioned throughout the entire work.

algebraical symbols

These come up during the education of Emile in mathematics. They are special symbols, which, once their meaning is known, makes it possible for people to perform feats of mathematics that would be difficult or impossible otherwise.

God

God is referred to many times and must be observed to be a recurrent object of awareness throughout the text. This is particularly significant as Rousseau was familiar with atheism and agnosticism. Rousseau, a Catholic, is clearly advocating God as a real entity and therefore as an object of reality and perception, rather than solely as an object of consciousness or imagination. Rousseau is saying: God is actual, not an illusion or creation of the imagination.

the mind's eye

This comes up in the fifth and final book of the treatise. This is the symbolic but real phrase used to describe how the confluence of thought and sensory facts leads to perceptions. An entire perception can be seen with the mind's eye.

son-in-law

This is the role of a woman's husband in relation to her parents. This would be Emile, in relation to Sophy's parents. He is referred to by role rather than by individual during the fifth book of the treatise.

wealth

Financial wealth is referred to during the portions in which Emile and Sophy's relationship is dicussed. Emile is wealthy. Sophy is informed that her father had been wealthy when her parents married. Wealth is not entirely denigrated, but simultaneously respected and warned about.

Themes

Educational Reform

This treatise is based upon the need for educational reforms within France. The author tackles this massive subject through the use of creating what modern psychologists would call an artificial case study through the use of theoretical models.

The levels of education that the author Rousseau has attempted to give alternative solutions for are many. He wants to make reforms from the earliest years onwards. Much to the dismay of many contemporary readers and people of his day, he urges women away from reliance upon child care. "Do this yourselves" he advises, for nothing will ever be superior to your child than to care for and nurse him or her yourself.

He then states quite plainly that he feels that mothers ought to nurse their own infants, and children whereas fathers are to teach them. He next explains how it is that this follows a certain development that falls in line with the philosophy of John Locke over in Britain. Cultivating the physical body and senses of any offspring comes prior in significance to any manner of book learning. He goes into some further detail about this. Much has been done that follows along these lines in European and American cultures since. Toddlers are now expected to climb, with mothers urged not to stop this, but to figure out how to make it safe for the child. This exemplifies acceptance of the idea that nurturing the physical abilities in the formative years is the right course of action.

Rousseau is also making a stand against educational institutions and absolutely advocating what in present terminology is "home schooling." A child's best instruction, he insists, will always come from his own father. There is a reminder to readers that Rousseau's mother died, and his father was his tutor. As such, Emile's tutor is his father throughout the treatise. He asserts that whatever the shortcomings, parental education will provide the best match for a boy. Rousseau's focus is on male education, though he also suggests that girls ought to follow their mothers around to achieve the equivalent effect.

The final steps that Rousseau takes is that he strongly encourages providing intimate guidance in the arena of marriage, but in a manner that respects the independence of choice for both men and women. Arranged marriages are not a bad idea, with that choice included. The rest of the young man's preparations for the married life are to be conducted with the tutor. The tutor/mentor should continue to be available for advice after he has relinquished the role of Master to the young man.

Human Development

The education of the individual in the treatise is molded around the natural flow of human growth. The human starts out small, and strangely strong with respect to its own size but radically fragile. During the treatise, Rousseau explains that in France in the

1700s the mortality rate of children was 50%. As such, finding ways to make the most of each stage of life but also to nurture so as to facilitate the development of strong children was acutely felt by the society.

Each stage of life is cataloged by the author. Rousseau marks a new phase with a new book. At each time, the education of the child is modified to address the new concerns and hopes that are associated with them.

During the entire process, Rousseau includes efforts to educate students in ignorance. This is not to be confused with intentionally leaving people ignorant, although he does also do some of that. He seeks to cultivate the ability to use reason without being constantly deluded by the distortions that emerge from the use of speculation and drawing conclusions from limited facts. When ignorance is recognized and accepted it is hoped that knowledge can be too, and that over all, the person will suffer less from confusion.

The stages that the treatise covers are: infancy to toddlerhood, then childhood up to the point prior to puberty, puberty and adolescence, with a final crescendo into preparations for married and professional life which Rousseau describes as 'entry into society'.

Philosophy and human progress

This work of Rousseau's has been used in some academies as a philosophical piece. It pertains to the body of European philosophy or Continental philosophy. It reflects a profound influence of British thought. During the introductory materials the scholar has explained that the epistemological position upon which Emile's method of education is based has been a reaction, or response to Descartes, another French thinker.

Philosophy plays a peculiar role in the world. Human beings are influenced by it, but the way that it impacts on a given culture depends upon how cultures relate to the field on the whole. Philosophy can seem to be useless. However, if it were not empiricist philosophy our full range of empirical sciences would have stagnated.

Rousseau was fortunate in that his country was known to be strong in this field of human endeavor and more interested in it than many others.

The purpose of Emile was to generate public discussion and actual reform throughout France at the very least. Decisions made by mothers and fathers were meant to be directly effected by the contents of the book. Rousseau admits that he hopes that he has written up something of value, along the order of a theoretician, and that individuals will make decisions that serve to put these changes into practice. As such, the people who make these choices would be conducting practice. In this special regard, Rousseau's treatise is a work of practical philosophy.

Rousseau hoped his work would spur human progress. One hundred years after Emile, the German philosopher Hegel was going to publish a work that explicitly described this whole idea of practical massive human progress through history. Rousseau's work,

was of a kind to either recover lost ground in human society, or to in fact advance the French sociologically.

The development and use of laws and then the writing of them are one of example of human social progress. So are many technological advancements. The spread of civil and civic rights are construed to be sociological advancement and development.

Rousseau hopes that his ideas for reform in France will impact the way the population is raised. His intention is progressive, and corrective. How deeply a society colludes with notions of progress indicate the philosophy of that culture and time. For this reason, although they do not have a perfect record, philosophy and its practitioners generally have endeavored to be part of progress and solution, at least in the Western traditions. In France in the 1700s, it is Rousseau's Emile.

Style

Perspective

The author was born in Geneva, Switzerland. He was a craftsman's son, and thereby a member of the middle class. His work is translated from French, which does affect how it comes across to readers.

The time and culture from which it emerged was France in the midst of the 1700s. The culture on the whole was in a more libertine phase. Rousseau was known to have associated with unconventional ideas such as atheism and sex without marriage. In Emile, he professes the conventional approach to marriage. In fact he goes so far as to advocate a limited form of arranged marriage.

He has created a narrative voice for the work. Unless one has read his other works, it is not possible to precisely distinguish his personal voice as a writer and the alterations that he made when writing Emile, representing the boy's father and tutor. He has written the work with some shifts in perspective but most of it is third person, devised by the author. Some is narration by the author.

Tone

The tone of the work is encouraging. The author introduces his project and shares with readers the method that he is going to use to do it and then proceeds. The tone is direct. Rousseau refers to the reading audience more than once during the course of Emile.

The exposition is clear and plain in style. He maintains the work as if it were a monologue or a lengthy portion of a dialogue. As it is a book, it is less tiresome than it might become in the event of spoken communication.

There is variation as the author moves from espousal of his theory in and out of examples in the text. These scenarios are quite effective for sharing his thoughts in coherent and easy to understand ways.

The writing style is informative and pleasurable. It is neither too dry nor wracked with cynicism such as one might find in Voltaire. There is criticism but solutions are also proposed that could be put into practice.

The tone of the work is such that anyone who can make sense of it will feel that she or he is supposed to be included amongst the readership.

Structure

The treatise has a sensible order. There is a set of introductory pieces and then there is the main body of the work. The table of contents page in the Everyman edition is not particularly helpful. It clearly demarcates the boundary between each preface and the bulk of the work. Then it gives no indication whatsoever of how that is separated within itself.

Further order is created by the division of the text into five books. Each one contains the writings dedicated to one major stage of a growing person's life. These proceed in the same order that a person's life does. They do not carry on to the end of anyone's life, but only into the mid-twenties when the power of control has been relinquished back to the person who has grown up.

The scholars have set out some information to help readers interpret Rousseau's writings with the proper context and a sense of perspective. After that, the English version of the work is presented. There is infancy, with the author's criticisms of present French society. Then there are two books on childhood. After that, there is one book dedicated to adolescence. Finally, the last book is devoted to women as potential marital partners and the rites of passage involved with courting, marriage and essential determinations about careers. The book closes as the young Emile takes the next step beyond, and discloses that he is going to become a father.

Quotes

"Would you cultivate your pupil's intelligence, cultivate the strength it is meant to control,"
(p. 96).

"If I received a blow in the course of my duties to Emile, far from avenging it I would boast of it; and I doubt whether there is any man in the world so vile as to respect me any less on this account," (p. 250).

"There is a certain directness of speech which is suitable and pleasing to innocence," (p. 214).

"He has little power of generalization; he has no skill of abstraction," (p. 204).

"He is now sufficiently educated to be docile; he recognizes the voice of friendship and he know how to obey reason," (p. 356).

"Instinct was good while he acted under its guidance only; now that he is in the midst of human institutions, instinct is not to be trusted; it must not be destroyed; it must be controlled which is perhaps a more difficult matter," (p. 357).

"We have reached the last act of youth's drama; we are approaching it's closing scene," (p. 384).

"But for her sex, a woman is a man...Yet where sex is concerned man and woman are unlike," (p. 384).

"Even at Sophy's feet he cannot help casting a glance at the country and longing to explore it in her company," (p. 475).

"Reduce him all at once to a sedentary life and you condemn him to chains and imprisonment," (p. 474).

"The first time we went to see Sophy, we went on horseback, so as to get there more quickly," (p. 475).

"Minds are formed by language; thoughts take their color from it," (p. 86).

"The philosophic spirit has turned the thoughts of many of the historians of our times in this direction," (p. 242).

Topics for Discussion

What do you think of swaddling, and swaddling clothes? Explain whether you agree or disagree with Rousseau on this matter.

How does Rousseau's Emile fit into the field of philosophy at the time that his works were published in the 1700s?

Advocate or disagree with Rousseau's assertion that fathers should be their children's, or at least their son's, teachers.

Defend home schooling or institutional education or a combination thereof, based upon your views about the world you live in. Describe your beliefs in relation to Rousseau's Emile.

What do you think of Emile calling his father-tutor Master? Explain your answer.

Give an opinion of the words Master and Mistress. Given they actually mean the same thing, but in different gender forms, express some feeling about how they are used in contrast to how we might make best use of the terms.

Respond to Rousseau's suggestions to prepare teenagers for marriage beginning around age 15.

Defend or attack the notion of arranged marriage as presented by Rousseau in book 5 of the treatise.

Give an over all personal impression of the treatise. Do you feel it has value for people now, in our culture, or does it only have historical value?