

# **A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man**

## **Book Notes**

**A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man by James Joyce**

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.

# Contents

<a href="#">A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man Book Notes.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Author/Context.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">Plot Summary.....</a>	<a href="#">5</a>
<a href="#">Major Characters.....</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Objects/Places.....</a>	<a href="#">10</a>
<a href="#">Quotes.....</a>	<a href="#">12</a>
<a href="#">Topic Tracking: The Artist.....</a>	<a href="#">15</a>
<a href="#">Topic Tracking: Language.....</a>	<a href="#">17</a>
<a href="#">Topic Tracking: Modernism.....</a>	<a href="#">19</a>
<a href="#">Topic Tracking: Religion.....</a>	<a href="#">21</a>
<a href="#">Part 1, Sections 1 (pg. 3-4) &amp; 2 (pg. 4-25).....</a>	<a href="#">23</a>
<a href="#">Part 1, Section 3 (pg. 25-39).....</a>	<a href="#">26</a>
<a href="#">Part 1, Section 4 (pg. 39-61).....</a>	<a href="#">27</a>
<a href="#">Part 2, Sections 1 - 3 (pg. 62-91).....</a>	<a href="#">29</a>
<a href="#">Part 2, Section 4 (pg. 91-102) and 5 (pg. 102-108).....</a>	<a href="#">32</a>
<a href="#">Part 3 (pg. 109-158).....</a>	<a href="#">34</a>
<a href="#">Part 4 (pg. 159 -187).....</a>	<a href="#">36</a>
<a href="#">Part 5, Section 1 (pg. 188-235).....</a>	<a href="#">39</a>
<a href="#">Part 5, Section 2 (pg. 235-243) &amp; 3 (pg. 243-269).....</a>	<a href="#">42</a>
<a href="#">Part 5, Section 4 (pg. 270-276).....</a>	<a href="#">44</a>

## Author/Context

The printer who was to make copies of James Joyce's first book of stories, *Dubliners*, refused to do so, saying he would not print indecent material. Joyce, only twenty-four at the time, responded, "I seriously believe you will retard the course of civilization in Ireland by preventing the Irish people from having one good look at themselves in my nicely polished looking glass." (Norris 56) Never modest and always ambitious, James Joyce did go on to leave his distinctive mark not only on Irish literature, but on all of Western literature. His work was so epic, so strange and beautiful and surprising that when the Romanian artist Brancusi went to draw a portrait of Joyce he had to draw two. The first was a sketch of the artist's face; the second was a swirly line, twisting outward in ever-increasing circles from its center, a shape both graceful and mysterious.

Joyce was born in Dublin, Ireland, the city that inspired his fiction, in 1882. This was nearly twenty years before the death of Queen Victoria, a time when all lands west of the English Channel were in the midst of religious and moral conflict. Ireland was in great turmoil at this time, as the country tried to shake free from the lingering influence of the English and define itself as a distinct entity with its own language and history. As a boy, Joyce roamed Dublin alone and with his father, walking past buildings that had been fine dwellings of the aristocracy a hundred years before, but had, as a result of various conflicts, been abandoned to tenement occupation. Joyce's father filled his son's memory with songs and stories, with religious, historical and political material, all of which made its way into Joyce's novels later in life.

*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* was drafted in rough form in 1904, when Joyce sat down and in one day wrote an autobiographical sketch. Before it evolved into its current short, five-section form, the novel was a thousand-page version titled *Stephen Hero*. The novel is to some degree autobiographical, though how much so is debatable. Certainly Stephen and Joyce share many life details. Like Stephen, Joyce was raised by a kind mother and a father who drank and had constant money troubles. Also like Stephen, Joyce attended Clongowes Wood College and then Belvedere College, and he went on to the University College, Dublin, when he was sixteen.

Although the novel ends before Stephen finishes college, Joyce continued his study of modern languages until his graduation in 1902. He then left for Paris, and except for several brief returns to Ireland, would remain an exile living in various places in continental Europe for the rest of his life. His companion in exile was Nora Barnacle, with whom he had two children and married in 1931. Asked in his middle years whether he would ever return to Dublin, Joyce said, "Have I ever left it? When I die, Dublin will be found engraved upon my heart." (Norris 11)

Joyce's most famous works include a book of short stories, *Dubliners* (1914); *Portrait* (1916); *Ulysses* (1922) and the experimental *Finnegan's Wake* (1939). Joyce's historical timing was good, for the critics already had their sensibilities shaken-up by other revolutionary intellectual endeavors: Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity in 1905; the work of Sigmund Freud; and the strange new art of the Cubists and the Dadaists

throughout the early years of the century. *Ulysses* brought Joyce international fame and he was admired almost as a cult leader or saint by many writers of the time.

Joyce's work is not easy to read, although *Portrait* is considered to be among his more accessible works. Joyce himself said that he deliberately kept some parts of *Ulysses* mysterious, "To keep the professors busy for centuries." (Norris 106) As a writer, Joyce did to the written page what the Cubists did with their paintings. He broke the old surface up by refusing to present it from one simple perspective. His prose gets its jumpiness and rhythm from the minds of characters it is funneled through, and the works are full of often-obscure references to people, places and literature of the past and present.

After his eyes failed him and the mental illness of his daughter drew Joyce's attention away from writing, his creative career ended. He died in 1941, and true to his own words, has left plenty behind to keep the professors busy.

### **Bibliography**

Anderson, Chester. *James Joyce*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1967.

Joyce, James. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. New York: Penguin, 1976.

Kermode, Frank and John Hollander, eds. *Modern British Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Norris, David and Carl Flint. *Introducing Joyce*. New York: Totem Books, 1997.

Stanley, Thomas and Bernard Benstock, eds. *Approaches to Joyce's Portrait*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976.

# Plot Summary

The novel tells the story of the first twenty years of Stephen Dedalus--a young Catholic boy growing up in late 19<sup>th</sup> century Ireland. As the title suggests, this is the story not just of a young man, but of a boy developing into an artist. The book opens in Stephen's nursery with two pages of prose that were revolutionary for the time. It then chronicles the political and religious pulls on this generally good-hearted and naïve little boy, both those of his family and his classmates and teachers at Clongowes, an all-boys school run by Jesuit priests (Part 1). Next, Stephen goes to Belvedere College, where he is a model student, though a bit alienated and increasingly tormented by a bodily lust that eventually drives him to a prostitute (Part 2). The first prostitute is not the last, and Stephen is plunged into a life of serious Catholic sin, though he repents after a series of sermons delivered at a religious retreat at his school (Part 3). Stephen does a complete turnaround after the retreat and devotes himself to God, attracting the attention of the director of the school, who proposes to Stephen that he join the priesthood, a call that Stephen, after a little initial prideful excitement, declines (Part 4). He goes instead to the university, where his classmates and teachers treat him as a budding poet, and the novel ends with Stephen having made the commitment to be an artist, though not having actually created much in the way of art (Part 5).

James Joyce first wrote *Portrait* as a one-thousand page novel, full of well-developed scenes and long explanations of Stephen's motives, but he decided to trim it into a short book with a new sort of style. Joyce's ambition was to hang a story on a series of important incidents. Although these incidents are presented chronologically, there is often no transition from scene to scene. Among the more important of these scenes are:

- Stephen in his nursery, trying to make sense of his surroundings;
- a Christmas dinner at the Dedalus house with two guests--Dante Riordan and Mr. Casey--where a huge fight about religion breaks out;
- Stephen being asked by the bully at school whether he kisses his mother before he goes to bed and being confused when he's laughed at for answering 'yes';
- Stephen being unfairly hit by a priest and then telling on this priest;
- Stephen wanting to kiss a girl, Emma, on a tram ride but not doing it;
- Stephen traveling to Cork with his father and feeling alienated from his own father and his friends;
- Stephen winning an essay prize and feeling empty after he squanders all the money; Stephen's first trip to a prostitute;
- his transformation by sermons given at a religious retreat;
- his confession of his sins;
- his refusal of the priesthood;
- his moment of "epiphany" when he sees a beautiful girl wading on the beach and declares he'll commit himself to art;
- and his creation of his first poem.

More happens between these scenes but the point is that Joyce shows Stephen's growth not by a connected story but through a series of illuminating moments.

More important than a continuous story is the evolution of Stephen's mind and sensibilities as shown by his responses to these illuminating moments. If you listen to the sound of the prose and the organization of Stephen's thoughts, you can feel that he's growing older. For example, in his nursery, happenings are reported as so: "When you wet the bed first it is warm then it gets cold. His mother put on the oilsheet. That had a queer smell" (pg. 3). As a boy at Clongowes, Stephen's thoughts sound boyish: "Rody Kickham was a decent fellow but Nasty Roche was a stink" (pg. 4). By the time Stephen gets to the university, the sound of the prose is completely different--it's long and flowing and full of big but elusive ideas, like Stephen's own mind. It's also important to pay attention to the rhythm of the story. Each section ends on a high note, with Stephen's emotional elation, but the start of the following section is always flat, as Stephen comes to terms with his often grim and dirty life in Dublin.

The book ends on the upswing--closing with a series of entries from Stephen's diary that show he has made the decision to live his life as an artist. It's unclear, however, whether he will succeed at this. He's got lots of big ideas but has only completed one poem, and the poem isn't all that good. If the pattern of the book were extended past the last chapter, the old fall into griminess would be next. Critics argue about whether Joyce was sympathetic toward Stephen and saw him as a young version of himself, ready to take on the world as an artist, or if the author had an ironic attitude toward his character and wanted readers to see him as a poser, a boy who has given all of his energy to talking about art without ever really creating any. No one has come up with a decisive answer to the question of Joyce's intentions. Perhaps guessing at what fate awaits Stephen as an artist is less important than seeing the decisions a young person must make in order to commit himself or herself to the idea of life as an artist.

# Major Characters

**Stephen Dedalus:** The 'artist' of the novel's title, whose life and thoughts are at the center of the story. The book follows Stephen's life from his nursery, to his upbringing in a home with lots of financial, religious and political tension, to religious school where he decides not to become a priest, and finally to the university, where he is seen by his peers as a poet and is working to develop his own theories of art and beauty. Stephen's trials show us not only the life of a growing boy in late 19th century Dublin, but also the thoughts and decisions a person has to deal with in order to become an artist. Even though he writes only one poem, the implication is that Stephen has made the decisions necessary for a life of art. Stephen's experiences are very similar to Joyce's, making the novel a loose autobiography.

**Stephen's father (Simon Dedalus):** Described by Stephen near the end of the novel as ' medical student, an oarsman, a tenor, an amateur actor, a shouting politician, a small landlord, a small investor, a drinker, a good fellow, a storyteller, somebody's secretary, something in a distillery, a taxgatherer, a bankrupt and at present a praiser of his own past' (pg. 262), Stephen's father is in turns a model and an embarrassment to his son. His passions about religion and politics make these topics a big part of Stephen, too, and Mr. Dedalus' drinking and financial troubles force Stephen and his family to move around a lot when he's growing up.

**Stephen's mother:** Mrs. Dedalus has a less direct effect upon Stephen than does his father, although she surely has a hand in forming his expectations of women. Stephen seems to outgrow his mother, especially after he is teased by his schoolmates at Clongowes for answering that yes, he does kiss his mother before bed. Mrs. Dedalus is not mentioned much in the middle of the book but she reappears at the end. Having borne a lot of children and characterized by her steady faith in God, Stephen is troubled about whether to comply with her wishes that he participate in a religious Easter ceremony.

**Uncle Charles:** Uncle Charles lives with the Dedalus family at Blackrock and is Stephen's constant companion during that summer. He buys Stephen treats and takes him along to church, though soon grows witless and disappears from the novel.

**Dante Riordan:** A character modeled on Joyce's aunt, who was his first educator as a young boy. In Portrait, Dante comes to Christmas supper and gets in a huge religious argument with another dinner guest. Like her real-life counterpart, Dante's uncompromising faith in priests and the Catholic faith has a strong effect upon the young boy. Dante does not appear in later parts of the novel.

**Parnell:** An Irish political figure who was very much on the minds of the people during Stephen's childhood. Parnell was a Protestant and a leader for the common people, but lost many of his fans when he was caught in an adulterous affair with the wife of a political colleague. Mr. Dedalus and Mr. Casey are pro-Parnell; Dante is decidedly against him.



**Father Arnall:** A priest and teacher at Clongowes. Father Arnall sits by and does nothing when Stephen is unfairly pandied (beaten with a type of paddle ). He also leads the religious retreat that so affects Stephen.

**the prefect (Father Dolan):** Even though the prefect only shows up in one scene, his cruel pandying (beating) of Stephen shakes loose some of the boy's faith in religious authorities. Later in the novel, Stephen's father mentions that he's seen the prefect and they'd had a good laugh about the incident, which further disturbs Stephen's notion of religious authority.

**Mr. Casey:** A friend of Mr. Dedalus', who gets into a shouting match with Dante at Christmas dinner. This is the only scene in which we see Mr. Casey, although his dramatic shouts 'No God for Ireland!' surely have a lasting effect upon Stephen.

**Emma (the girl from the tram):** Emma is the girl most on Stephen's mind. As children, Stephen and Emma have a memorable ride home from a party together (on a tram), after which Stephen tries to write a poem to her. Emma appears often later in the novel, although she's not usually mentioned by her name. She continues to be Stephen's primary muse.

**the bird girl (the wading girl):** Stephen sees this girl standing on the beach right when he's in the process of deciding that he will definitely not join the priesthood. Her beauty inspires him and he takes her to be a muse, a reason and an inspiration to choose a life of art and beauty rather than religious devotion.

**Cranly:** A friend of Stephen's at the university who has a long discussion with Stephen about religion and Stephen's artistic ambitions near the end of the novel. Stephen likes Cranley, though it's suggested that a life of art may mean that Stephen will not be able to keep friends like this. Stephen is also a bit suspicious that Cranley may have some sort of relationship with the same girl he's after.

## Minor Characters

**Jack Lawton:** Stephen's intellectual rival at Clongowes.

**Wells:** A bully at Clongowes who pushes Stephen into a ditch.

**Athy:** A boy that is in the infirmary with Stephen at Clongowes. Later, Athy has the information that several boys who are in trouble with the school were caught smuggling (having sexual relations with other boys using the hands).

**Simon Moonan:** One of the boys at Clongowes who was allegedly caught smuggling (having sexual relations with other boys using the hands).

**Eileen Vance:** A girl Stephen is friends with as a young boy. Stephen is fascinated with her hands.





**Fleming:** A boy who gets pandied (beaten with a type of paddle) by Father Dolan on the same day as Stephen.

**the rector at Clongowes:** The head of the school, who Stephen goes to complain about being unfairly hit.

**Mike Flynn:** A friend of Stephen's father who is a track coach for Stephen while he's at Blackrock. Stephen doesn't trust Mike Flynn.

**Aubrey Mills:** Stephen's best pal at Blackrock--the two roam the countryside together and pretend to be great adventurers.

**Heron:** A boy at Belvedere school who is an intellectual rival of Stephen's. Heron is more rebellious than Stephen, but the two do have something like a friendship.

**the director of Belvedere:** The director is a priest who calls Stephen in one day to discuss the possibility that Stephen has a divine calling to become a priest. Stephen refuses in part because the director has such a weary, saggy look.

**Davin:** A student at the university and a friend of Stephen's. Davin is very nationalistic, that is, part of the movement to resurrect Ireland's old language and culture.

**the dean of the university:** Stephen has a long conversation with the dean in one of the classrooms as the dean is building a fire. An Englishman, the dean stirs up some feelings of superiority and alienation in Stephen, who is beginning to feel that the language of the English is not his own.

**MacCann:** A student at the university who is leading a petition drive for universal peace.

**Temple:** Another student at the university--Temple is quite a talker.

**Lynch:** A friend of Stephen's at the university. Lynch and Stephen go for a long walk during which Stephen articulates many of his aesthetic theories.

## Objects/Places

**Dublin:** The Irish city where Joyce and Stephen grow up. The city-with all of its diversity and gritiness-seemed to inspire Joyce the same way it does Stephen; it is stimulating to the mind and the senses. Joyce was an exile from Dublin for most of his adult life, but the city is still the setting for all of his major fiction.

**Ireland:** The Ireland of Stephen's time was a place where politics, history and religion (Catholics vs. Protestants) made for a lot of tension. The influence of the English was still on everyone's minds and there was a strong nationalist movement, which sought to bring back Ireland's old culture and language. The boys Stephen knows at the university talk a lot about the nationalist issue, and the question of what role he should play as an artist in Ireland's nationalist struggle is something Stephen often thinks about.

**Clongowes:** The first school that Stephen attends. Private, all-boys, and run by Jesuit priests, Clongowes does much to form Stephen's expectations of school and education. At Clongowes, Stephen is a model student, though somewhat of an outsider. It is here that some of Stephen's respect for the religious life is diminished after he is unfairly hit with a pandybat by one of the priests.

**Dedalus:** Stephen's last name and also the name of a character from Greek mythology who built mazes and was once trapped inside one of his own creations. He escaped this predicament by making wings of wax and flying out of the labyrinth and is known as the 'cunning artificer' for his ability to escape dilemmas by his own work and cunning.

**pandybat:** A flat, wooden bat that the priests at Clongowes hit the boys with as a form of punishment. The pandybat is particularly painful and is much feared by the boys. Stephen is unfairly hit with the pandybat once.

**Blackrock:** A suburb south of Dublin where the Dedalus family and Uncle Charles live for a while. They're forced to leave because of financial troubles.

**The Count of Monte Cristo:** A famous adventure novel by Alexandre Dumas. Stephen finds the novel particularly engaging, and his imagination often runs wild when he thinks of Mercedes, the leading lady in the book.

**Belvedere:** The school that Stephen goes to as an older boy. It is here that he is approached by the school director about the possibility of giving his life to God as a priest.

**Virgin Mary:** Mary is a symbol of the pure inspiration women can be to men. She is for Stephen the opposite of the other sort of women in his life-prostitutes. Stephen often calls Mary to mind when his life feels like it's getting out of control.

**Lucifer:** Lucifer was an angel who fell from heaven and became king of the underworld after he refused to serve God. His famous phrase of defiance is 'I will not serve,' words that Stephen himself repeats near the end of the novel.

**St. Thomas Aquinas:** A 13th century Catholic theologian from Italy who wrote extensively about aesthetics (the theory of what is beautiful and what is art). Much of what Stephen articulates as his own aesthetic theory is borrowed, and often misapplied, from Aquinas.

**Stephen's poem:** Stephen completes his only poem one inspired morning while he's a university student. Even if it's not a great work of art, the poem is important because it marks a beginning of artistic creation (rather than just talk about artistic creation) for Stephen.

**stream of consciousness:** The style of writing where a character's thoughts stream naturally into the text to show the character's actual thought process. Characterized by sudden stops and jumps, moments of incoherence and fluid patterns, this style was used by Joyce in parts of Portrait, though not as much as in his later works.

**retreat :** The Catholic retreat that happens at Stephen's school affects him profoundly. Stephen has been particularly sinful-thinking impure thoughts and frequenting prostitutes-and the hellfire sermons terrify him into a resolution to give all this up and live a holy life again.

**epiphany:** Similar to 'feeling the light bulb turn on,' this is a moment when everything suddenly becomes clear. Joyce made the epiphany famous. Stephen has a moment of epiphany when he sees the bird girl on the beach and realizes he will be an artist.

# Quotes

Quote 1: "Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow that was coming down along the road met a nicens little boy named baby tuckoo...." Part 1, page 3

Quote 2: "Stephen Dedalus  
Class of Elements  
Clongowes Wood College  
Sallins  
County Kildare  
Ireland  
Europe  
The World  
The Universe" Part 1, page 12

Quote 3: "By thinking of things you could understand them." Part 1, page 43

Quote 4: "The noise of children at play annoyed him and their silly voices made him feel, even more keenly than he had felt at Clongowes, that he was different from others. He did not want to play. He wanted to meet in the real world the unsubstantial image which his soul so constantly beheld." Part 2, page 67

Quote 5: "During this process all these elements which he deemed common and insignificant fell out of the scene. There remained no trace of the tram itself nor of the trammen nor of the horses: nor did he and she appear vividly. The verses told only of the night and the balmy breeze and the maiden lustre of the moon. Some undefined sorrow was hidden in the hearts of the protagonists as they stood in silence beneath the leafless trees and when the moment of farewell had come the kiss, which had been withheld by one, was given by both." Part 2, page 74

Quote 6: "A vision of their life, which his father's words had been powerless to evoke, sprang up before him out of the word cut in the desk." Part 2, page 95

Quote 7: "He recalled his own equivocal position in Belvedere, a free boy, a leader afraid of his own authority, proud and sensitive and suspicious, battling against the squalor of his life and against the riot of his mind." Part 2, page 96

Quote 8: "He closed his eyes, surrendering himself to her, body and mind, conscious of nothing in the world but the dark pressure of her softly parting lips. They pressed upon his brain as upon his lips as though they were the vehicle of vague speech; and between them he felt an unknown and timid pressure, darker than the swoon of sin, softer than sound or odour." Part 2, page 108

Quote 9: "It was his own soul going forth to experience, unfolding itself sin by sin...." Part 3, page 110



Quote 10: "looking humbly up to heaven, he wept for the innocence he had lost." Part 3, page 150

Quote 11: "His destiny was to be elusive of social or religious orders.... He was destined to learn his own wisdom apart from others or to learn the wisdom of others himself wandering among the snares of the world." Part 4, page 175

Quote 12: "The snares of the world were its ways of sin. He would fall. He had not yet fallen but he would fall silently, in an instant." Part 4, page 175

Quote 13: "Did he then love the rhythmic rise and fall of words better than their associations of legend and color? Or was it that, being as weak of sight as he was shy of mind, he drew less pleasure from the reflection of the glowing sensible world through the prism of a language manycolored and richly storied than from the contemplation of an inner world of individual emotions mirrored perfectly in a lucid supple periodic prose?" Part 4, page 180

Quote 14: "Yes! Yes! Yes! He would create proudly out of the freedom and power of his soul, as the great artificer whose name he bore, a living thing, new and soaring and beautiful, impalpable, imperishable." Part 4, page 184

Quote 15: "His thinking was a dusk of doubt and self-mistrust lit up at moments by the lightnings of intuition, but lightnings of so clear a splendor that in those moments the world perished about his feet as if it had been fireconsumed...." Part 5, page 191

Quote 16: "His language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted its words. My voice holds them at bay. My soul frets in the shadow of his language." Part 5, page 205

Quote 17: "The artist, like the God of the creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails." Part 5, page 233

Quote 18: "I will not serve." Part 5, page 260

Quote 19: "To discover the mode of life or of art whereby [my] spirit could express itself in unfettered freedom." Part 5, page 267

Quote 20: "I will tell you what I will do and what I will not do. I will not serve that in which I no longer believe whether it call itself my home, my fatherland or my church: and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defense the only arms I allow myself to use--silence, exile, and cunning." Part 5, page 268

Quote 21: "I do not fear to be alone or to be spurned for another or to leave whatever I have to leave. And I am not afraid to make a mistake, even a great mistake, a lifelong mistake and perhaps as long as eternity too." Part 5, page 269

Quote 22: "Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race."  
Part 5, page 275

Quote 23: "Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead." Part 5, page 276

# Topic Tracking: The Artist

## Part 1

The Artist 1: Stephen shows some early signs of artistic temperament, including his tendency to associate things he sees with what he's read in books. He also has a wandering mind that is often led astray by beautiful sounds or things, as in "White roses and red roses: those were beautiful colors to think of" (pg. 9).

The Artist 2: If the ability to be rebellious for what you believe in is a necessary quality of an artist, Stephen shows a bit of this by telling on the prefect. His resolution to be "quiet and obedient" (pg. 61) with the prefect, however, indicates that authority still has a strong pull on him.

## Part 2

The Artist 3: At Blackrock, Stephen feels more alienated--he isn't particularly moved by Uncle Charles' religious devotion and he mistrusts Mike Flynn. It is *The Count of Monte Cristo*, a work of literature, rather than the people around him that interests Stephen most.

The Artist 4: Like the characters in *The Count of Monte Cristo*, the characters Stephen sees on the streets of Dublin stimulate his imagination. Stephen's imaginative life is blossoming.

The Artist 5: Stephen's thoughts as he tries to compose the poem to Emma give the first hint of his aesthetic sensibilities, suggesting how he will create art if he does become an artist.

The Artist 6: Stephen increasingly feels the pull of "intangible phantoms" (pg. 88), phantoms that presumably include the ambition to be an artist. But the pull to be a gentleman and a good Catholic threaten to keep him from a life devoted to art.

The Artist 7: The fragment from a Shelly poem on pg. 102 suggests that weariness may await the artist who forsakes companions and daily pleasures in pursuit of art. This concept of "weariness" is mentioned often, sometimes suggesting that weariness befalls the artist, other times that to not have art in one's life is what leads to weariness.

## Part 3

The Artist 8: Even as Stephen is walking to confession, the physical world competes for his attention with more heavenly thoughts. If indeed a fascination with the physical world, with "the common accents, the burning gasjets in the shops, odours of fish and spirits and wet sawdust, moving men and women" (pg. 152), is what makes an artist, it seems right to say that Stephen has an artistic temperament.

## Part 4

The Artist 9: In the process of making his decision to turn away from a life devoted to God, Stephen finds himself thinking about words. His thoughts on p. 180 about what it is he loves about words suggest that he's already beginning to try and nail down his philosophy of art.

## **Part 5**

The Artist 10: At the university, Stephen is thought of by his classmates and teachers as a poet, or at least a poet-in-training. So at this point his public image is that of an artist.

The Artist 11: Stephen finally completes his first poem. The poem is pretty, though not spectacular. It is a bit of a relief, at any rate, that he's finally gotten beyond just talking about art and into the business of trying to create some.

The Artist 12: By the end of the novel, Stephen has resolved in his mind that he will choose the life of the artist, regardless of the exile and loneliness he may have to suffer because of this decision.



# Topic Tracking: Language

## Part 1

Language 1: The language in the opening pages of the novel is disjointed and even babyish. This is Joyce's signal that the narrative style of the book will change to reflect the changes in Stephen's mood and mentality.

Language 2: Stephen's fascination with the word "suck" (pg. 8) shows him trying to come to an understanding of the relationship between a word's sound and its meaning. His curiosity about words, along with the way he is moved by the words of a song (pg. 22) are perhaps an early indication that he will grow up to be a writer.

Language 3: Stephen's appropriation of the religious phrases "Tower of Ivory" and "House of Gold" as phrases to represent the little girl Eileen show how his mind is flexible about language. He is willing to take a phrase out of its common context and apply it to his own experiences.

Language 4: When Stephen is filled with elation after having confronted the rector, the language speeds up and is full of "horroos!" reflecting Stephen's own mood. These closing pages of Part 1 also show the tendency of each part to end with a high, emotionally charged feeling.

## Part 2

Language 5: The language in Part 2 becomes increasingly sexually suggestive as Stephen gets more preoccupied with sex.

Language 6: When Stephen sees the word "foetus" carved in the desk at his father's old school, he has a very visceral reaction. He's startled to think that the boy who carved the word might also have been thinking about sex, a preoccupation that Stephen seems to consider his solitary, horrible hang-up. It's interesting that one written word can have more power to move Stephen than all of his father's stories.

Language 7: Stephen's experience with the prostitute is something that's beyond words, although it is linked with language with this description of the prostitute's lips. "They pressed upon his brain as upon his lips as though they were the vehicle of a vague speech...." (pg. 108).

## Part 3

Language 8: The shift in language from the lyrical end of Part 2 to the gritty description that opens Part 3 - "Stuff it into you, his belly counseled him" (pg. 109)--illustrates the pattern of a shift from "high" to "low" language that happens between the end of each section and the beginning of the next.

Language 9: The language of the sermons is interesting. It goes on for so long that it's as if Joyce wanted the reader to be subjected to these sermons for as long and to the same degree as Stephen himself.

#### **Part 4**

Language 10: The language used to describe Stephen's thoughts begins to soar after he makes his decision not to join the priesthood. It references music and leaping flames:

*"It seemed to him that he heard notes of fitful music leaping upwards a tone and downwards a major fourth, upwards a tone and down a major third, like triplebranching flames leaping fitfully, flame after flame, out of a midnight wood."* (pg. 179).

#### **Part 5**

Language 11: The start of Part 5 has a marked tonal difference than the end of Part 4. As at the start of Part 3, Stephen is surrounded by food, and words like "dripping," "dregs," and "boghole" suggest that Stephen's mind has taken another dip from the lyrical possibilities of language and life to its not-so-pretty everyday realities.

Language 12: As Stephen walks past the city shops, he's disturbed by the waste or misuse of language; these signs have turned words with poetic possibility into "heaps of dead language." (pg. 193).

Language 13: Stephen's conversation with the dean, an Englishman, makes him think about how English is not really his own language. For the Irish, English is both "familiar" and "foreign," always an "acquired speech."

Language 14: The conclusion of the novel with Stephen's diary entries means that the narrative has shifted from the impersonal third-person point of view to the personal first-person and suggests that Stephen is now ready to use his own words to determine and express his own destiny.

# Topic Tracking: Modernism

## Part 1

Modernism 1: The first two pages of *Portrait*, so distinctive in style and technique, are an example of the experimentalism that made Joyce's writing so different from that of his 19<sup>th</sup> century predecessors. Stephen's way of perceiving the world affects the sound of the prose, making the boundary between the narrator and the character hard to determine.

## Part 2

Modernism 2: The city and life within it are topics that the modernists often wrote about. Dublin exerts a defining influence on Stephen and the way he perceives the world.

Modernism 3: The way Stephen thinks when he's composing the poem to Emma (the tram girl) reflects a modernist theory of writing. Remove all but the most essential details and only suggest, rather than spell-out, the conflicts that lay beneath the scene. Ernest Hemingway called this "The Iceberg Theory," meaning a writer shows only the alluring tip of what may really be a huge conflict.

Modernism 4: Joyce is not afraid to write honestly about sex. In an era when writers were expected to be discreet, if not downright prudish about portraying sex, the scene between Stephen and the prostitute is quite daring.

## Part 3

Modernism 5: The disproportionate number of pages that the sermons are allotted in the novel demonstrates a style of writing *contrary* to the modernist philosophy that only the most essential details should be shown. Joyce had a way of breaking rules.

## Part 4

Modernism 6: The "mimetic technique" that was more widely used by modernist writers is clearly shown in the pages after Stephen decides he won't join the priesthood. As Stephen's mood surges and soars, so does the writing. Mimetic writing mimics the character's mood and mind.

Modernism 7: Stephen's thoughts about his own name bring up the issue of myth and modernism. Modernist writers like Joyce (T.S. Eliot is another example) had a respect for writers and ideas of the past and often referenced myths and mythical characters in their work.

Modernism 8: Stephen's decision to devote himself to art after he sees the bird girl is an example of an "epiphany." Epiphanies, often portrayed in modernist writing, happen when a character is transformed in one moment of penetrating insight.

## Part 5

Modernism 9: When Stephen thinks as he's walking to school about "common lives," he's expressing a modernist's concern for the lives of people who are not rich or well-known. Modernist writing often portrays the very real problems of characters that may not have been considered "literary" enough in times past.

Modernism 10: When Stephen looks at Maple's Hotel, full of boring middle-class people too comfortable to be affected by art, his reaction of contempt expresses the modernist attitude that true art must be created for art's sake only, not in the hopes of changing people (who are often too silly or stubborn to be changed).

Modernism 11: Stephen's decision to take on art and the world alone shows a notion of individuality that was relatively novel in this time period. In the modern era, the idea of one person taking on the world (vs. a person acting as part of a community) became a more popular way of thinking about the self.

# Topic Tracking: Religion

## Part 1

Religion 1: At Clonglowes, Stephen is very humble before God and religion. He is afraid to not say his prayers and he has an implicit faith in the wisdom and goodness of his teachers because they are men of God.

Religion 2: The explosive argument at Christmas dinner shows how important and how politically heated religious issues are in Ireland at this time. Stephen also learns that religion is worth getting worked-up about as he sees his father break down in tears over it.

Religion 3: Young Stephen's respect for religion is shown by the frightened dumbfoundedness he has about the possibility that some of his classmates may have stolen church money or church wine.

Religion 4: The unfair beating Stephen suffers, and Father Arnall's failure to set the prefect straight, give Stephen his first reason to doubt the moral authority of religious men.

Religion 5: Stephen, although he has chosen justice over blind obedience to authority by telling on the prefect, is still at this point humble before religious authority. He reminds himself to be "quiet and obedient" (pg. 61) before the prefect.

## Part 2

Religion 6: Stephen's indifference about going to church with Uncle Charles indicates that he's lost some of his religious awe and faith at this point.

Religion 7: When Mr. Dedalus tells Stephen he had a good laugh with the rector and the prefect over the time Stephen complained about being beaten, Stephen is forced to reinterpret the past. The faith he felt in justice reigning at the end of Part 1 is completely shaken.

Religion 8: Despite his religious education, Stephen's visit to a prostitute at the end of Part 2 marks his decision to experience the world via sin rather than piety.

## Part 3

Religion 9: Not only is Stephen sinning, he's being quite hypocritical by continuing to act the part of a religious leader at school. His guilt, however, catches up with him early in the religious retreat.

Religion 10: Father Arnall's sermons work on Stephen exactly as planned. Remembering that one's fate--heaven or hell--is determined by one's actions on Earth, Stephen is persuaded by fear and guilt to confess his sins.

#### **Part 4**

Religion 11: Stephen refuses the offer to join the priesthood--sensual life and experience are too important to him. He feels this decision is a refutation not only of the priestly life, but of religion itself, and senses his imminent "fall."

Religion 12: When he's walking home from the world of a religious father and into the neighborhood of his own father, it is suggested that Stephen feels both these types of fathers as possible models for his own life.

#### **Part 5**

Religion 13: In his conversation with Cranly, Stephen seems ready to completely turn from religion in pursuit of art. He even quotes Lucifer, allying himself with the fallen angel: "I will not serve" (pg. 260).

## Part 1, Sections 1 (pg. 3-4) & 2 (pg. 4-25)

*"Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow that was coming down along the road met a nicens little boy named baby tuckoo...."* Part 1, pg. 3

With these words we are thrown into the world of Stephen Dedalus, or more correctly, the world of Stephen Dedalus' mind. The phrase is a part of a rhyme that Stephen's father repeated to him as a very young boy. What comes next doesn't make much more sense: "His father told him that story: his father looked at him through a glass: he had a hairy face" (pg. 3), and by the end of the page we have jumped from the moocow story to a song about wild roses, to the observation that when you wet the bed first it is warm and then it gets cold, to a few odd words about Stephen's mother, his Uncle Charles, and a woman named Dante. All these jumps and fragments are Joyce's obvious signal to his readers that this will not be an ordinary story told in the old, reader-friendly way.

So what's going on here? Most novels are organized from a clear-thinking and often adult point of view. All of the random observations and jumps in logic that might go on in a person's mind are ironed out and a fairly straightforward story is told. But think of the way your mind moves when you walk down the street. You might be thinking about your lunch, and then a bus drives by and reminds you of your old babysitter's house, which was by the bus station, then, with your mind back in the past, you might remember your mother and the way she looked when you were ten, then you might pass a cookie shop where the smell takes your mind off of the old babysitter and your mother and over to Christmas at your grandmother's. Joyce tries to capture the randomness of a mind in this novel--a technique called "stream of consciousness" and the result is that it jumps about, rarely finishing a scene, and it is at times quite difficult to make sense of it.

Because we are inside Stephen's mind, the narrative pulls in all sorts of references from what he's read and seen as a boy growing up in late 19<sup>th</sup> century Dublin. Given a passage like this one we meet on the first page: "Dante had two brushes in her press. The brush with the maroon velvet back was for Michael Davitt and the brush with the green velvet back was for Parnell. Dante gave him a cachou every time he brought her a piece of tissue paper" (pg. 3), we will be properly stumped. What's a brush? Who's Michael Davitt? Who's Parnell? What's a cachou? By referring to the notes we can learn that Davitt and Parnell were two Irish politicians of the time, and that a cachou was a popular cashew candy (the brushes aren't explained). While the passage isn't completely clarified, we get some notion of Dante's character: she has political sentiments and she gives Stephen candies.

Topic Tracking: Modernism 1

Besides reading the book's foot notes, try also to pay attention to the sound of the words. Joyce wrote prose like poetry. He wanted the words to sound beautiful, and sometimes meaning is actually less important than the sound and rhythm of the words.



If you let the words take you like music, then the story actually carries you along. You begin to feel like you're really inside of Stephen's head.

### Topic Tracking: Language 1

Stephen does move from place to place in the novel, but often the setting will shift without any warning. In the very short first section, Stephen is in his nursery. In the second section he is at Clongowes, the preparatory school he's gone to as a young boy. The section starts in the schoolyard, where Stephen is participating halfheartedly in a game of rugby. Then we follow him to a classroom, to the dining hall, the playroom, study hall, the chapel, his room and finally the infirmary, where Stephen goes after he wakes up sick one morning. But these settings are generally less important than Stephen's running thoughts as he is moving about. In fact, young Stephen seems a bit confused about where he is, and he writes the following in his notebook in an attempt to get his bearings:

*"Stephen Dedalus  
Class of Elements  
Clongowes Wood College  
Sallins  
County Kildare  
Ireland  
Europe  
The World  
The Universe" Part 1, pg. 12*

We begin to get an idea of what sort of boy Stephen is. He is small and weak, and would prefer to be in study hall where it's warm and quiet than out on the rugby field. He misses his parents, and is keeping a count of the days left until Christmas vacation, when he can see them again. Stephen thinks of himself as a smart kid. He and a boy named Jack Lawton seem to be the sharpest students in the class, and Stephen also associates a lot of what he sees with what he's read in books. He does get picked on a bit, apparently he's been pushed into a wet ditch by a class bully, after refusing to trade his snuffbox for the boy's hacking chestnut, and this dip in the ditch sends Stephen to the infirmary. The bully, Wells, later asks Stephen in front of a group of boys whether he kisses his mother before he goes to bed. When Stephen answers yes, Wells makes fun of him. When Stephen changes his answer to no, Wells makes more fun. We get the impression of a young boy who has just left home and has not yet developed a thick skin or the tough-guy talk that will help him escape being teased.

We also learn a lot about Stephen's way of sensing and organizing the world in this section. He is a boy in tune with his senses. He sits in the dining hall covering and uncovering his ears, listening to the noise that roars like a train. He is very sensitive to the feel of the bedsheets, first freezing cold and then wonderfully warm with heat from his own body. He remarks on the cold night smell in the chapel (like peasants, air, rain, turf and corduroy). He sees how the red silk badge on Jack Lawton's shirt looks even redder because Lawton's wearing a blue cap that brings out the red. Of the five senses,





only taste doesn't get dealt with much in this section (though it does later in the book). Stephen has acute senses, and his memory is strongly linked to his senses: seeing a green and maroon-colored drawing makes him think back to Dante with her green and maroon brushes. Memories are also very vivid to him.

This sensitivity of Stephen's, along with his bookishness and his tendency to steer clear of typical young boy activities give us the first notion of him as a boy that will grow into an artist. Also, it's worth explaining the epigraph (quote that begins the book): "Et ignotas animus dimittit in artes." The quote means, "And he applies his mind to obscure arts," from an old Latin work, *Metamorphoses*, by Ovid. The "he" is the mythic character Dedalus, who made wings to escape from a maze called the labyrinth. Dedalus is symbolic of man's ability to transcend worldly problems by his own creativity. In that way he is a symbol of an artist. Stephen shows several signs of an artistic temperament in this section. For example, when he's trying to figure out the answer to a math question, he gets distracted by the thought of roses and is happy to meditate on the beauty of the colors of red and white rather than get back to the practical business of doing his math problem.

#### Topic Tracking: The Artist 1

Stephen also has a particular tendency to wonder about words, suggesting that writing might be the sort of art he'll eventually pursue. He thinks about the way one word can have two completely different meanings. "That was a belt round his pocket. And belt was also to give a fellow a belt" (pg. 5) He obsesses about the sound of words, like "suck," which has a queer and ugly sound to him. And he gets particularly emotional about the words he reads. At one point he is moved almost to tears by the line of a song, "Bury me in the old churchyard."

#### Topic Tracking: Language 2

Finally, we see in this second section that Stephen is clearly in a world of religion. Clonglowes is run by religious men. His teacher is a priest, Father Arnall, and Brother Michael runs the infirmary. Stephen says his prayers at night with the fear that he'll go to hell if he doesn't, and he equates religion with smarts, "Father Arnall knew more than Dante because he was a priest" (pg. 7).

#### Topic Tracking: Religion 1

The section ends with Stephen recovering in the school infirmary. The waves of firelight on the walls take his memory back to the politician Parnell's funeral, where the mourners knelt by the water's edge and mourned their hero's death beside the waves.

## Part 1, Section 3 (pg. 25-39)

The memory of flames that ended the previous section takes us to another fire--that in the fireplace at the Dedalus house on Christmas day. The jump in time is a little unclear, though Stephen is a bit older. The main action happens because the two guests, Mr. Casey and Dante Riordan, have very contrasting political ideas. Stephen's father, Simon Dedalus, has opinions similar to Mr. Casey, and as he digs in to a big slice of turkey, Mr. Dedalus makes a comment of a political nature that irritates Dante. Soon, despite Mrs. Dedalus' pleas that they all keep politics away from the dinner table tonight, the three are into a heated discussion that turns positively ugly. Dante's opinion is that it is fine that priests and bishops involve themselves in worldly matters like collecting taxes and advising the public on issues of politics. Mr. Casey and Mr. Dedalus think that priests need to leave politics alone. Mr. Casey tells a story about how he spit tobacco juice in a woman's eye after she insulted Parnell, the religious reformer that Casey and Mr. Dedalus admire. This anecdote disgusts Dante, and soon Mr. Casey is yelling "No God for Ireland!" Dante storms out the door, Mr. Casey is weeping, and Stephen (whose observations are not very prevalent in this section), "terrorstricken" by the whole scene, sees that his father's eyes are also full of tears.

Topic Tracking: Religion 2

## Part 1, Section 4 (pg. 39-61)

Back at Clonglowes again, Stephen is in a hushed discussion with some of his classmates about several other students who were caught doing something, though no one is quite sure what it is they've done. One student says he heard the boys stole some money from the rector's office. Then Wells, the bully who pushed Stephen into a ditch, says that they were caught sneaking wine from the church. Stephen, who is quiet through this interchange, is shocked that the students would even think to do such a horrible thing.

The boys on the schoolyard look smaller to Stephen because yesterday a boy on a bike knocked him over and broke his glasses. As Stephen listens, his ears even more attentive than usual because his eyes aren't working so well, Athy speaks out and says he knows what the boys were caught doing. It was smuggling, Athy says, and a heavy silence settles over the group. Stephen doesn't know what smuggling is (it's a sexual act involving the hands between two boys) and he instead starts thinking about the boys who were allegedly involved, among them Simon Moonan and Tusker Boyle, called Lady Boyle by the boys because he is so attentive to his fingernails. This thought leads Stephen's mind to Eileen a young Protestant girl who lives down the street, and her hands. They are like ivory, only soft, Stephen thinks. He thinks of the religious phrases "Tower of Ivory" and "House of Gold," and associates the ivory with Eileen's fingers and the gold with her hair. For Stephen at this age, interpreting most everything as it relates to his own experiences makes a lot of sense. *"By thinking of things you could understand them."* Part 1, pg. 43

Topic Tracking: Language 3

The silence of the boys on the topic of smuggling begins to make Stephen afraid, but soon they start talking about the punishment those four boys and all the boys of the school will have to suffer. The noise of the cricket bats on the field gets Stephen thinking about the pandybat that the school officials use to hit the boys as punishment for any number of offenses. The students are called into class, and Stephen is still thinking about the crime committed by the boys, and what a horrible crime it is if they did steal something from the church.

Topic Tracking: Religion 3

Father Arnall comes in to give the Latin lesson, and he's furious because the boys did a lousy job on their homework. He gets angrier when no one can answer a grammatical question he asks. Arnall orders Fleming, the boy who did the worst job on his homework, to kneel in the middle of the classroom. Then in comes the prefect of studies, and he gives a terrifying whack of the pandybat on a desk. He proceeds to flog Fleming six times on each hand, a vicious action that reduces the other boys to terrified silence. Then the prefect notices Stephen is not writing like the other boys and demands to know why. Stephen has been excused from the lesson by Father Arnall because his glasses are broken, but the prefect refuses to believe that this isn't all some schoolboy

trick. Stephen gets his first cracks with the pandybat, and his body reacts by shaking in shame and fear and rage. The prefect leaves, saying he'll be back tomorrow, and Stephen, trying to hold back tears, can only think of how unfair it is that Arnall said nothing to stop the beating, even though Stephen didn't deserve it.

Topic Tracking: Religion 4

Afterwards, the boys, knowing Stephen was wronged, encourage him to go to the rector and complain before the prefect can come back tomorrow. Stephen, who has been told by his own father to never "peach on a fellow" is torn. He thinks he might get himself in worse trouble by complaining but he just can't get over how unfairly he's been treated. As the boys leave the dining hall, Stephen ducks out of line and climbs the stairs to the rector's office, and he can feel all the eyes of the boys upon him. He explains the situation to the rector, who is kind and says he will clarify everything with the prefect.

When Stephen returns to the boys and explains what happened he gets a hero's response. They hoist him up in the air and cheer. Stephen is thrilled, though he thinks that he will not be smug with the prefect, he will stay "quiet and obedient" (pg. 61).

Topic Tracking: Art 2

Topic Tracking: Religion 5

The section ends with a report on the smell, feel, look, and sound of the evening.

Topic Tracking: Language 4

## Part 2, Sections 1 - 3 (pg. 62-91)

The Dedalus family is living in Blackrock now, a suburb south of Dublin, and old Uncle Charles is Stephen's summer companion. Uncle Charles takes Stephen along on his errands. He buys the boy sweets, brings him along on his stops into church, and takes him to the park where Mike Flynn, a running coach and old friend of Stephen's father, trains Stephen as a runner. Stephen accompanies Uncle Charles and his father on long Sunday walks and listens to their stories and political discussions. -He is still too young to understand everything, but he hangs on their words and tries hard to follow. At night, Stephen reads an old copy of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, a book that stimulates his imagination, especially the parts about the female character, Mercedes.

Topic Tracking: Religion 6

Stephen is friends at this time with a boy named Aubrey Mills, and the two romp together through the countryside. September arrives and Aubrey goes off to school. Stephen isn't sent back to Clongowes because his family is having financial troubles. Stephen seems to be taking a weight upon his shoulders as his "boyish conception of the world" (pg. 67) is shaken; he's becoming more of a loner.

*"The noise of children at play annoyed him and their silly voices made him feel, even more keenly than he had felt at Clongowes, that he was different from others. He did not want to play. He wanted to meet in the real world the unsubstantial image which his soul so constantly beheld."* Part 2, pg. 67

Topic Tracking: The Artist 3

The language in these pages becomes increasingly sexually suggestive. Stephen's preoccupation with Mercedes and the mention of words like "tryst," "tenderness," and the "strange unrest [that] crept into his blood" (pg. 67) suggest that Stephen is beginning to feel the sexual longings of an older boy.

Topic Tracking: Language 5

One day, a band of moving trucks hauls all of the furniture out of the house in Blackrock and the Dedalus family moves again. It seems as though Mr. Dedalus' financial misfortunes are the cause of this move. Stephen begins to wander through the big city, and the bustle of city dwellers stirs his imagination. Stephen and his mother also make occasional visits to family relatives, relatives who are basically strangers to Stephen.

Topic Tracking: Modernism 2

Topic Tracking: The Artist 4

After a children's party that Stephen attends, sitting on the outside rather than joining in the activities, he rides the tram home with one of the young girls. Her flirty behavior makes his young heart crazy, and though he senses she might want him to kiss her, he

cannot summon the nerve to do so. After the ride, he sits and tries to write a poem to the girl, named only as E--C--. This is an early attempt by Stephen to turn his feelings into art, and though he struggles at first, he does write something and we get an explanation of young Stephen's sensibility as a writer.

*"During this process all these elements which he deemed common and insignificant fell out of the scene. There remained no trace of the tram itself nor of the trammen nor of the horses: nor did he and she appear vividly. The verses told only of the night and the balmy breeze and the maiden lustre of the moon. Some undefined sorrow was hidden in the hearts of the protagonists as they stood in silence beneath the leafless trees and when the moment of farewell had come the kiss, which had been withheld by one, was given by both."* Part 2, pg. 74

Topic Tracking: The Artist 5

Topic Tracking: Modernism 3

Stephen's growing disgust with some of the world's ways is increased when Mr. Dedalus returns one day with a story about how he's talked with the rector at Clongowes and they had a good laugh over the story of Stephen telling on the prefect. Mr. Dedalus goes on to say that he ran into the prefect, and they too had a good laugh about it. It disgusts Stephen to think that something that was downright wrong can be smoothed out over time into something to laugh about.

Topic Tracking: Religion 7

Stephen is now in a school called Belvedere, and has a role in the school play. He doesn't come on until the second act, and moody as ever, heads out of the auditorium to brood and get some air before he's on. Outside, he runs into Heron, a boy who rivals Stephen for the title of the smartest in the class. Heron is smoking with his friend Wallis, and the three have a witty conversation until Heron hits a nerve by mentioning the fine looking girl (Emma) he saw come in with Stephen's family. Heron keeps telling Stephen to "admit!"--to reveal his crush.

The word "admit" takes Stephen's memory back to the time when one of his teachers accused him of having heresy in his weekly essay. That incident had passed without much drama, but a few nights later Heron and two other boys had started a discussion about writers with Stephen, who'd gotten all worked up about Byron, his favorite poet. Byron was a heretic, the boys said, and Stephen said he could care less, and he'd nearly gotten beaten up for refusing to back down. Stephen doesn't hold any grudge about this incident now, though he's not particularly eager about being friends with Heron, either.

Topic Tracking: The Artist 6

Backstage, Stephen breaks out of his moodiness and is boyishly pleased by the experience of acting onstage. Afterwards, riding high with excitement, he finds his family and is immediately deflated when he sees that the girl from the tram is no longer with

them. He takes off for a fast walk to calm his mind, and the sight of the lane and smells of "horse piss and rotted straw" (pg. 91) help bring his senses back under control.

## Part 2, Section 4 (pg. 91-102) and 5 (pg. 102-108)

Stephen goes with his father to visit Mr. Dedalus' old school in Cork. On the train ride, Stephen is generally embarrassed by his father, especially his drinking. They get to the school, where a porter leads them on a tour, which isn't impressing Stephen with its stink of "jaded and formal study" (pg. 95). He's startled out of his disgust, however, when he sees the word "foetus" carved several times in one of the desks. The word, with its mild sexual connotations, has a strange effect upon Stephen:

*"A vision of their life, which his father's words had been powerless to evoke, sprang up before him out of the word cut in the desk."* Part 2, pg. 95

Topic Tracking: Language 6

Some of the sexually suggestive language that has begun to appear in the narrative is better explained by this response of Stephen's. Apparently, his mind has been full of sexual fantasies of late, and he's been tormenting himself, thinking that he's the only boy in the world who has such thoughts. We get a good summary of Stephen's self-perception at this point in his life:

*"He recalled his own equivocal position in Belvedere, a free boy, a leader afraid of his own authority, proud and sensitive and suspicious, battling against the squalor of his life and against the riot of his mind."* Part 2, pg. 96

Stephen's mind continues to riot as he half-listens to his father's stories, which both bore and anger him. As an attempt to get his focus back, he does something similar to the list of places he'd written in his notebook at Clongowes. Now he repeats in his head that he is Stephen Dedalus, he is in Cork, their room is in the Victoria Hotel. All this makes him try to remember his childhood, but the memories are dim. Stephen is obviously having trouble coming to terms with the fact that he will grow older and never again be the child he once was.

Before leaving Cork, Mr. Dedalus meets some of his old cronies at a bar, and Stephen is again bored, angered and alienated by the chatter about the good old times that he considers foreign and uninteresting. He gets some lines of the poet Shelley's in his head: "Art thou pale for weariness/ Of climbing heaven and gazing on the earth/ Wandering companionless...?" (pg. 102) Stephen's mind, while certainly a bit self-indulgent, is more focused on artistic and passionate matters than is that of his father or anyone else he sees around him.

Topic Tracking: The Artist 7

Some time later, Stephen and his family are in the bank of Ireland, where Stephen is handed the money for an academic prize he's won. Stephen is both generous and



frivolous with the money, buying himself and his family treats, giving out loans, and riding the tram all around the city. When the money runs out, Stephen is crushed to feel as alone and miserable as ever. He begins to wander the streets of Dublin again, his blood boiling and taking him into the seedier parts of the city. Finally, the fate he's been heading toward is fulfilled when a prostitute takes his arm and leads him into her room. Stephen is steamrolled by the experience:

*"He closed his eyes, surrendering himself to her, body and mind, conscious of nothing in the world but the dark pressure of her softly parting lips. They pressed upon his brain as upon his lips as though they were the vehicle of vague speech; and between them he felt an unknown and timid pressure, darker than the swoon of sin, softer than sound or odour."* Part 2, pg. 108

Topic Tracking: Language 7

Topic Tracking: Modernism 4

Topic Tracking: Religion 8

## Part 3 (pg. 109-158)

Stephen, having now committed the sin his body and mind have been driving toward, is filled with a sort of dumb hunger for food and a desire to go out to the brothels again. He is sixteen years old.

*"It was his own soul going forth to experience, unfolding itself sin by sin...."* Part 3, pg. 110

Topic Tracking: Language 8

All of that time spent with priests and brothers, however, is beginning to pull at Stephen. Soliciting a prostitute is not only socially unacceptable, it's a mortal sin. But he also has a kind of pride in his sin at this point, and is cheeky enough to lead the young boys at chapel in their devotionals to the Virgin Mary without blinking an eye. His indifference isn't safe though as he begins to "grope in the darkness of his own state" (pg. 113), and the sin falls heavily upon him when he attends the religious retreat at his school. As the rector preaches the goodness of St. Francis Xavier, the patron of the school, Stephen feels the first pang of a guilt that will nearly crush him during the retreat.

Topic Tracking: Religion 9

The main part of the retreat is a series of sermons, all aiming to make the boys think about death, judgment, hell and heaven. On the first day Father Arnall gives a taste of things to come, warning the boys to keep God and their own afterlife in mind when they are considering their behavior on earth. Stephen eats hungrily after listening to this talk, and as he looks out the window over the dirty streets, he has a premonition of the unrest that is to come. After the first long sermon preaches a doomsday envisionment of religion, where a vindictive God has nothing but wrath for sinners, Stephen is sure that every word was aimed at him. He goes onto the street, where the laughter of a girl haunts him and his mind boils with guilt over the prostitutes he's frequented, the dirty letters he's written and all the rank imaginings of his mind. He imagines Emma, and wants his innocence with her back again.

The preacher of the second sermon tells of Lucifer, the fallen angel cast from heaven because he dared to say "I will not serve," and the hell he has created for sinners. The sermon is full of graphic descriptions of a hell with walls four-thousand miles thick, where sinners are crammed so tight they can't move a hand to pull off a worm that might gnaw on their eye. The sermon goes on and on, telling of the stench, the fires, the horrible company of other sinners, and the taunts of devils. When the preacher describes the devils' prods--Why did you sin? Why did you not give up that lewd habit, that impure habit?--it's as if the questions are aimed directly at Stephen. He leaves the chapel with his legs shaking, though gradually pulls himself together with the consolation that he will give up his sins and be forgiven. But when a messenger comes to say confessions are being heard, Stephen can't bring himself to confess. The afternoon sermon is on the spiritual torments of hell, the pains of loss, conscience,

extension and the intensity and eternity of hell. On the last point, the preacher uses the saying: "ever, never; ever, never" to make his point--hell goes on forever, and you never receive God's pardon. When all the boys fall to their knees, Stephen solemnly joins them in a prayer, swearing he detests his sins, promising to repent.

Topic Tracking: Language 9

Topic Tracking: Modernism 5

Stephen returns to his room, aching in his whole body and soul. While praying, he has a vision of horrible beasts that so overwhelms him he gets physically sick. Then,

*"looking humbly up to heaven, he wept for the innocence he had lost."* Part 3, pg. 150

Topic Tracking: Religion 10

Stephen sets off to walk the streets, the questions running through his mind. He can't understand how his body can act so contrary to what he knows to be morally right and feels that it's almost like being possessed by some beast. As he walks through Dublin, he's pulled by both the sensual stimulation of the city and the mental stimulation of his thoughts.

Topic Tracking: The Artist 8

Finally, Stephen walks to a church, ready now to make the confession he was unable to make at the school retreat. He has to wait in the church for the other confessors to finish, which leaves him plenty of time to keep meditating on the wretchedness of his sins. He gives his confession to the priest, who is kindly and seems genuinely disturbed about Stephen's sins. The priest implores Stephen to give up the prostitutes, a sin not only unacceptable to God, but dangerous to the body. Stephen is immediately set more at peace, and after being absolved by the priest feels that life is beautiful and peaceful again. When he gets home, even the paltry kitchen and the food that he's so often described as foul and greasy seems quaint again. "How simple and beautiful was life after all! And life lay all before him" (pg. 158).

The next day Stephen wakes and joins the other boys back at the chapel. The past is over, he realizes. He takes the Eucharist and is, presumably, on the holy road again.

## Part 4 (pg. 159 -187)

Stephen hasn't taken his redemption lightly--he is devotional in the extreme now, praying all day and carrying rosary beads in his pockets. Despite his seriousness about holiness, there are a few hints that this isn't coming totally naturally to him. For instance, his devotions sometimes feel to him like hitting keys on a great cash register. He has trouble accepting the idea that God loves him unconditionally, mainly because he hasn't known the emotion of true love yet himself, and his denial is so complete that at moments he's not sure why he should go on living instead of just die and hurry off to heaven. The boy that was so responsive to sensual stimulation has now devised ways to "mortify" each sense. He walks the Dublin streets with his eyes on the ground so as to deny the pleasure of sight. He sits in awkward chairs so as not to feel too comfortable. There's a sense of imminent failure lingering behind all of this piety, however, especially in Stephen's obsession with the idea that one trip to the brothel could undo all of it. "It gave him an intense sense of power to know that he could by a single act of consent, in a moment of thought, undo all that he had done" (pg. 165). But Stephen stays pious, going to confession and even confessing some of his old sins again when his holiness has left him no new transgressions to report.

Though there is not much indication of how Stephen's manner has changed with his schoolmates, he must be exuding his saintliness at Belvedere, because one day the director of the school, a priest, calls him in for a serious talk. Stephen has a notion about why he's been summoned, and sure enough, soon the director comes out with it--perhaps Stephen has a call to do God's work, to become a priest. Stephen's thoughts turn to the goodness of the priests he's known, though this seems a bit of reinterpretation of the past, especially if we remember his anger at being unfairly whacked with the pandybat. The idea of being a priest initially fills Stephen with pride and wonder. But Stephen also has a sort of intellectual condescension to the priests. He thinks in particular about how some of their responses to literature seem more motivated by their opinion of the author's devoutness than the author's ability as a writer. The priest tells Stephen he will pray that God reveals his will about Stephen's calling by the next morning. He warns Stephen to think carefully--the salvation of his soul may depend upon his answer.

Stephen's gut response is evident pretty quickly. He thinks back on the "mirthless mask" of the priest's face and while he's not cocky or dismissive, Stephen does make it clear that the priestly order seems to him void of passion and life: "the chill and the order of the life repelled him" (pg. 174). Walking the streets, he thinks:

*"His destiny was to be elusive of social or religious orders.... He was destined to learn his own wisdom apart from others or to learn the wisdom of others himself wandering among the snares of the world."* Part 4, pg. 175

This certainty gains steam, and he goes on, imagining himself in a way that brings to mind Lucifer, the fallen angel. *"The snares of the world were its ways of sin. He would fall. He had not yet fallen but he would fall silently, in an instant."* Part 4, pg. 175



Topic Tracking: Religion 11

Nearing his home, Stephen smells the rotten cabbages from kitchen gardens and smiles with almost wicked delight to think that the confusion and stink of his father's world can include the order of the religious world. The narrative, which has been quiet and still, like Stephen's mind, picks up speed and raucous noise as Stephen breaks out in a laugh.

Topic Tracking: Religion 12

In his house, Stephen's senses are noticing all--the wet crusts of bread on the table and his little brothers and sisters, who tell Stephen that his parents are off looking at a house. Apparently, the ever-present money troubles are forcing the Dedalus family to constantly move. The weariness he detects in his siblings, a weariness born out of being poor, saddens him but also stirs up his own unwillingness to let weariness keep him from enjoying the beauty of life.

Stephen will go to the university rather than into the priesthood. Fitful joy fills him at the thought of this, a joy reflected in the description of mood--he's being uplifted as if by long, slow waves.

Topic Tracking: Language 10

Stephen goes out walking along the seawall, where he passes a group of religious brothers that he can barely look at. As words fill his head, he begins to think about what it is he loves about words:

*"Did he then love the rhythmic rise and fall of words better than their associations of legend and color? Or was it that, being as weak of sight as he was shy of mind, he drew less pleasure from the reflection of the glowing sensible world through the prism of a language manycolored and richly storied than from the contemplation of an inner world of individual emotions mirrored perfectly in a lucid supple periodic prose?"* Part 4, pg. 181

Topic Tracking: Modernism 6

Topic Tracking: The Artist 9

Still walking, Stephen passes some of his classmates who are splashing in the sea. Though their bare skin disgusts him and their play seems childish, the way they call out his name leads him to meditation on its mythical reference Dedalus. He thinks that perhaps art was a destiny written into his very name, and that he was destined to be an artist, creating out of base earthly materials the stuff that can make humans soar.

*"Yes! Yes! Yes! He would create proudly out of the freedom and power of his soul, as the great artificer whose name he bore, a living thing, new and soaring and beautiful, impalpable, imperishable."* Part 4, pg. 184

Topic Tracking: Modernism 7

Stephen stands and looks out over the sea, feeling alone but empowered. It is now that he sees a girl standing in the shallow water, looking beautiful and birdlike, both woman and girl. All of Stephen's ambitions seem to coil around this bird girl, and though the two never share a word (she seems almost like she might be a figment of his imagination), she drives him to the epiphany that he will live a life devoted to art and beauty. Stephen falls asleep on the beach and when he wakes he is still joyous. The section ends with him looking out over the water, watching the sky and the water and the moon.

Topic Tracking: Modernism 8

## Part 5, Section 1 (pg. 188-235)

After the vision of the bird girl, we find Stephen right back in the greasy of life again, drinking watery tea and eating crusts of fried bread with his mother and siblings before his day starts at the university. A box of used clothing sits at the table. The Dedalus family is still poor, wearing donated goods now. Stephen's mother gives him a wash on the neck and behind the ears, and he has to sneak out the back door to avoid his father, who's ranting, wanting to know from Stephen's siblings if that "lazy bitch of a brother" (pg. 189) has left for school yet. Stephen seems much bigger and far less pious as we meet him here--the description of his look and his manner supports his mother's observation that the university has somehow changed him.

Topic Tracking: Language 11

Out on the muddy streets of Dublin, Stephen shakes the screeching of some mad religious woman from his ears, and chases from mind his father's whistling and his mother's mutterings. Focusing on the light and the smell of the wet leaves, he is gradually able to calm himself. He thinks of lines from writers as he makes his way through the streets, and we get an explanation of where his artist's mind is at this point.

*"His thinking was a dusk of doubt and self-mistrust lit up at moments by the lightnings of intuition, but lightnings of so clear a splendor that in those moments the world perished about his feet as if it had been fireconsumed...."* Part 5, pg. 191

Stephen is glad, however, that he has the city and the world of "common lives" (pg. 191) around him, to lighten the load and please his senses when he's not being struck by lightning bolts of intuition. But Stephen's mood still lurches about, and as he looks at the signs of shops full of language used only to sell things--"heaps of dead language" (pg. 193)--he feels that old weariness again.

Topic Tracking: Language 12

Topic Tracking: Modernism 9

Passing the statue of the national poet of Ireland, Stephen thinks of his friend from the university, Davin, who is a nationalist--someone who thinks Ireland's culture needs to be separated from that of the English and exalted. He remembers the story Davin told him one night, about how he'd been walking home over the country roads late at night and when he'd stopped for a glass of milk the peasant woman who answered the door invited him to spend the night. Davin refused, but the thought of this woman calling a stranger to bed makes Stephen think about the passions of his people--the poor of Ireland. Stephen is interrupted by a girl trying to sell him flowers--he has to refuse, for he has no money.

Stephen is not the most diligent student--he's already missed his first lecture of the day and realizes he's too late for the second. He arrives early to the lecture hall for his next class, and finds the dean crouched before the fireplace, trying to light a fire. He and



Stephen start talking about art and beauty, and it's revealed that much of Stephen's thinking is formed around the writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Stephen banters with the dean, but it's obvious he condescends--at one point Stephen compares him to a walking stick, with so little passion for life and God that he'll never be more than a tool for other men's purposes. The dean is also an Englishman, and because he is not Irish he gets Stephen thinking about something that seems to trouble him a lot these days--how the English language is for the Irish people a borrowed language. The object that the dean calls a funnel is a tundish to Stephen.

*"His language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted its words. My voice holds them at bay. My soul frets in the shadow of his language."* Part 5, pg. 205

#### Topic Tracking: Language 13

The two part amicably enough and in class Stephen shows himself to be a pretty distracted student, though no more so than most of those in the classroom. Stephen's mind drifts, stopping to make fun of stumbling, foolish professors and to consider the dirty whisperings of the fellows around him.

In the hall after class, some of the students are working a table to get signatures for a petition for universal peace. MacCann is running the show, and Stephen's closer friend Cranly is also there. It's clear that Stephen is seen by his fellow students as the poet among them, and they engage him with various degrees of joking and criticism, trying to get him to sign the petition. At this table begins a spirited, though sometimes difficult-to-follow discussion between the schoolboys that takes up much of this section. The boys throw around Latin phrases and literary references and the conversation is in turns joking and argumentative, as different students drift in and out. There is a lot of discussion about Ireland and the nationalist issue. Among the boys who talk are Temple, Davin, Cranly and Lynch.

Stephen and Lynch go off for a walk, and Stephen starts to explain his aesthetic theories. Laid out in detail, the theories are heavily based on Thomas Aquinas. Some of the main points include the belief that true art does not excite a physical reaction from its audience (it is "static" rather than "kinetic"). He observes that for something to be beautiful it must have the qualities of "wholeness, harmony and radiance" (pg. 229); and that the artist must gradually be sucked up by the beauty of his creation, making his self disappear from that creation.

*"The artist, like the God of the creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails."* Part 5, pg. 233

#### Topic Tracking: The Artist 10

A slight rain begins to fall, and Lynch and Stephen head to the library steps, where more students are talking. Stephen drifts out of the conversation, however, when a girl walks by and pulls his attention with her. He knows this girl, and it's presumably Emma,



though her name isn't mentioned. Her life and heart are compared to a bird's, also bringing to mind the bird girl from Part 4.



## Part 5, Section 2 (pg. 235-243) & 3 (pg. 243-269)

Stephen awakes inspired one morning and finally gets the words of his first poem down on paper, thinking as he does about his inspiration, the girl from the tram. It has been ten years since the evening he rode home with her. The poem, in its entirety, ends this section. It's nice (it repeats the lines: "Are you not weary of ardent ways," and "Tell no more of enchanted days" several times), though by no means is it a masterpiece.

Topic Tracking: The Artist 11

Standing on the steps of the library, Stephen watches a flock of birds and thinks about how men have watched birds flying for ages and how his own name--Dedalus of the self-made wings--references flight. Stephen finds Cranly inside and takes him away from a chess game. Outside, he gets into another rambling conversation and the girl passes out of the library once more. Again she gets Stephen's mind spinning. He goes to a corner away from the other boys and the smell of her body fills his mind. It's the feeling of a louse crawling on his neck that pulls Stephen from these thoughts, indeed pulls him into a moment of despair. The bug reminds him quite clearly of his poverty.

Stephen summons Cranly for a walk across the city, and as he waits for his friend, Stephen looks through the windows of a high-class hotel with irritation--these comfortable elite, he thinks, will never be changed by art.

Topic Tracking: Modernism 10

Stephen tells Cranly how he got in an argument with his mother because he doesn't want to participate in Easter ceremonies that ask him to display religious faith--his faith is waffling at best. Stephen, echoing the fallen angel Lucifer says,

*"I will not serve."* Part 5, pg. 260

Cranly and Stephen discuss this at length, Cranly arguing that Stephen should swallow his pride and do what his mother wants if it will make her feel better. Cranly and Stephen are here shown as having a crucial difference in character, and the implication is that Stephen's stubbornness may be what will make him the artist. The two pass a woman singing in her home, her voice drifting into the streets. Stephen says that he will probably have to leave Ireland to be an artist, and when Cranly asks him what he wishes to do with his life, Stephen tells him his answer is the same one he gave Cranly some time back:

*"To discover the mode of life or of art whereby [my] spirit could express itself in unfettered freedom."* Part 5, pg. 267

And Stephen goes on to develop this.



*"I will tell you what I will do and I will not do. I will not serve that in which I no longer believe whether it call itself my home, my fatherland or my church: and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defense the only arms I allow myself to use--silence, exile, and cunning."* Part 5, pg. 268

And these things, Stephen says, he does not fear,

*"I do not fear to be alone or to be spurned for another or to leave whatever I have to leave. And I am not afraid to make a mistake, even a great mistake, a lifelong mistake and perhaps as long as eternity too."* Part 5, pg. 269

Cranly, his voice full of seriousness, asks Stephen if he is fully aware what that means, to have not even one friend.

Topic Tracking: Religion 13

Topic Tracking: Art 12

Topic Tracking: Modernism 11

## Part 5, Section 4 (pg. 270-276)

The last seven pages of the book are from Stephen's diary, meaning that the book has completed a movement from third-person to first-person narration, as if Stephen has finally seized control of his own story. The first entry tells of the conversation he just had with Cranly; other entries include comments on people he's observed, descriptions of dreams, and lots of musing about Emma. Stephen's feelings seem to be swinging all over the place. Finally, he makes it clear that he's feeling the allure of new lands and that he will soon leave Dublin. Stephen is ready for this adventure.

*"Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race."* Part 5, pg. 275

His last words, referencing the myth of Dedalus, the artificer, are,

*"Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead."* Part 5, pg. 276

Topic Tracking: Language 14