**Questions to guide your analysis of ‘The Bridge’**

The story contains two main characters: first, the protagonist who narrates the story and who attempts to build a bridge out of his body. The second is a passenger who is the first one that attempts to cross the bridge.

**Questions from a Marxist point of view**:

How is the protagonist (the bridge) described?

How does he build the bridge?

What are the difficulties and the danger he faces while stretching himself over a ravine?

How does he behave when he heard the sound of a human being coming?

How does the narrator describe the passenger who is going to cross the bridge?

How does the passenger treat the man-made bridge? Was he sympathetic or cruel?

How does he test the firmness of the bridge?

Compare the bridge- man and the passenger? Which of them could stand for proletariat and which could represent the capitalists?

To answer these questions think of the bridge as a superstructure and of the economic base : that is to say, the bridge is a building which requires both the activity of worker(s) (proletariats) and the capitalist(s) who own the means of production and thus exercise power over the workers.

**Questions from New Criticism perspective:**

1-Discuss the form of the short story: the characters, place, time, narrator, action: what is the role of each character? Where do they act? When does the speaker in the story build the bridge?

2-Did he succeed in building the bridge?

3-Why does the bridge fall ? To answer this question think of the phrase “a bridge to turn around!”.

4-The man turns around because of his curiosity to see who is going to cross the bridge. What is your opinion about this behaviour?

While answering these questions you will realise that the man who tries to build a bridge out of his body does not succeed to do so because he could not resist his sense of curiosity; when he turns around, he forgets that he has already taken the duty to be a bridge which should not move or be shaken. Therefore, the theme of responsibility is worth being discussed in this story for the decision to be a bridge suggests that one is responsible for the lives of all people that are going to cross it. This desire (curiosity) which causes his fall suggests another theme: a human being turns too weak if he cannot overcome the urge of his inner drives.