$f(x) = x^2$, $g(x) = x^2 + 9$ ⟹

$(f \circ g)(x) = f(g(x)) = f(x^2+9)$

$= (x^2+9)^2$

We're feeding $g(x)$ to $f(x)$.

$g(x)$ is the input.

$f(x) = x^2$

$f(\square) = \square^2$

$f((x^2+9)) = (x^2+9)^2$

$= (x^2+9)(x^2+9) =$

$= x^4 + 18x^2 + 81$

$(g \circ f)(x) = g(f(x)) = g(x^2)$

$= (x^2)^2 + 9 = x^4 + 9$

g takes its input (x^2) and squares it. Then adds 9.

$g(\text{☺}) = \text{☺}^2 + 9$