

***British Literature for
Christian Homeschoolers***

**Volume 3:
*Jane Eyre***

Answer Key to Review Questions

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Jane Eyre, Week 16, Day 1 (Chapters I-IV)

1. How does the weather that opens *Jane Eyre* reflect her station in life?

It is cold and dreary, like Jane's life at Gateshead Hall.

2. List several things that Jane reads or thinks about that might be symbols of herself.

She reads about birds living in isolation among rocks, and while looking at a picture books thinks about a rock standing alone against the sea spray, a broken boat alone on a faraway coast.

3. What are John, Eliza, and Georgiana, and Mrs. Reed like?

John is fat and spoiled and bullies and abuses Jane. (He strikes Jane hits her with a book.) Eliza is the oldest daughter, bossy and selfish; Georgiana is critical and spoiled because she is pretty. Mrs. Reed, for some reason, hates Jane and allows her children to abuse her.

4. Why is Jane at Gateshead Hall? What incident especially demonstrates Mrs. Reed's cruelty to Jane?

Jane's father was a poor clergyman who married her mother against the wishes of her mother's friends, and her grandfather, who disinherited her. After only a year of marriage, Jane's parents both died of typhus fever. Mr. Reed is Jane's uncle—her mother's brother—and he required Mrs. Reed, his wife, to promise to take in Jane before he died.

After she is locked in the red room (where Mr. Reed died), Jane thinks of Mrs. Reed's treatment of her, and imagines Mr. Reed coming back from the grave to haunt the room, which scares her so badly she screams and pounds on the door to be let out. Bessie and Miss Abbott come, but Mrs. Reed says Jane is pretending to be scared to be let out, and shuts her in for another hour to punish her. Jane breaks down and faints.

5. How does the red room incident lead to changes at Gateshead and in Jane?

Jane weeps silently for days, and Bessie vainly tries to cheer her. Mr. Lloyd, the druggist, talks with Jane and learns she hates Gateshead Hall and the cruelty of the Reeds. Lloyd suggests Jane be sent to school.

6. Explain Jane's further isolation. How does she respond?

Mrs. Reed isolates Jane from her family almost totally, even at meals and at Christmas! The Reed children do not talk to Jane at all.

When John tries to talk to her, she punches him. Mrs. Reed says not to associate with her, and Jane cries, "They are not fit to associate with me." When Mrs. Reed slams Jane down on her crib, Jane says to her, "What would Uncle Reed say to you, if he were alive?" Jane takes comfort in a doll, loving it fiercely.

7. Explain Mr. Brocklehurst's reason for coming to Gateshead, and his character.

He is the manager of Lowood School (a charity institution) and a stern, "black pillar" of a man, grim in expression, large in face. Mrs. Reed asks him to admit Jane to Lowood

8. What is ironic about Brocklehurst's pronouncements on "humility" and Mrs. Reed's remarks on Jane's "deceitfulness"? Give specific examples.

Mrs. Reed recommends Jane be taught humility; Brocklehurst says this is a good Christian trait, and without realizing the irony, (a) says his own daughter recognized the humility of the Lowood girl students during a recent visit, when she said they all looked so plain and surprised to see the silk gown she wore; and (b) says he will be returning in a week or two to..."Brocklehurst Hall"!

Mrs. Reed warns Brocklehurst that all the adults should carefully watch Jane, since she has a “tendency to deceit,” a remark that is utterly galling, since Mrs. Reed herself is utterly lying about Jane.

9. Describe Jane’s final conversation with Mrs. Reed.

After Brocklehurst leaves, Jane studies Mrs. Reed, who is about 37 years old, sturdy, blond-haired, ruthless, in superior health and strong. Mrs. Reed orders Jane out, and Jane tells her she does not love her, will never call her “aunt,” will tell anyone who asks of her cruelty, and that she is the deceitful one. Mrs. Reed tries to counter her, but Jane tells her to send her away soon; Mrs. Reed leaves, and Jane considers the altercation a victory—a feeling that soon turns sour, however.

Jane Eyre, Week 16, Day 2 (Chapters V-VII)

1. Describe Lowood School, and compare it to Gateshead.

It is an all-girls school, grim, harsh, and cold, with inadequate heating, apparently making many of the girls sickly and prone to coughing. The day starts with prayers and Bible reading, but the girls are constantly given burnt, rotten, and/or foul-smelling food. The girls are all dressed plainly, in brown dresses, with no curls allowed, which looks odd to Jane.

Like Gateshead, it is harsh and not very welcoming or loving, but unlike Gateshead, Jane at least has a chance to make friends and improve herself.

2. Describe Miss Temple and the girl that Jane meets.

Miss Temple is the superintendent of Lowood—pretty, with curls and pretty clothes. After teaching lessons, she announces that she has ordered a lunch of cheese and bread to make up for the burnt porridge.

The girl Jane meets is punished unjustly by a teacher, who forces her to stand in the middle of a large room. The girl bears her punishment gracefully and calmly, which amazes Jane.

3. What do the pitchers in the girls’ rooms, the breakfast, and the gloves/boots indicate about Lowood?

The water in the pitchers is frozen—indicating is below 32 degrees in the rooms, which is too harsh for girls to live under, especially apparently sick ones. Breakfast is porridge again—not burnt, but meager, indicating that the girls are underfed. Jane is getting used to the Lowood schedule.

The girls don’t have any gloves or boots, even in extreme outside cold, forced to endure a number of hardships in the name of Christianity.

4. What does Jane learn by talking to Helen?

Jane finds Helen Burns and talks to her, amazed at Helen’s patience in bearing injustice; Helen tells Jane that she (Helen) deserves correction, since she is so absent-minded during her lessons. Helen praises Miss Temple. Jane tells Helen she believes she must fight back at those who are unjust; Helen says that that is a heathen practice, not a Christian one.

When Jane tells Helen of all she endured at Gateshead Hall, Helen says she should endure it, forgiving them and focusing on the eternal, rather than our earthly life.

5. How does Brocklehurst justify the girls’ harsh lifestyle? Compare this to James 2:14-17.

He complains to Miss Temple of waste on the girls' part, when it is actually his stinginess that deprives them of necessities. He says hardships are good for the girls, since it teaches them to get used to it, which disgusts Miss Temple.

This kind of horrendous false piety directly contrasts Mr. Brocklehurst's duty as a "Christian," which is to provide for the needs of fellow Christians: The Bible says, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:14-17).

6. What does the issue of curly hair and Jane's accident show about Brocklehurst, Helen, and Miss Temple?

Brocklehurst shames a girl for having curly hair, even though it is naturally curly, giving more evidence that he is a Pharisaical hypocrite, especially when he says nothing to the women and girls who enter the room at that moment—all with expensive clothes, and braided or curled hair.

Jane accidentally drops and breaks her slate, drawing Brocklehurst's attention, who berates her and calls her a "liar" in front of the entire school, forcing her to stand on a stool for a half hour and to forego conversation with anyone for the remainder of the day. Helen encourages her, saying the girls like her and dislike Brocklehurst, and this world is only temporary.

Miss Temple invites the girls into her room, asking Jane for her side of the story, which Jane gives. Miss Temple later tells Jane Mr. Lloyd wrote her and verified Jane's account, and she (Miss Temple) announces to the school that Jane was wrongly accused.

Miss Temple's approach is a marked contrast with Brocklehurst's actions—accusing Jane in front of the school with no proof. This energizes Jane, who improves in her studies, her memory, and her drawing skills—she draws happy, colorful items in nature. She now would not trade her life in Lowood for all the luxuries at Gateshead Hall.

Jane Eyre, Week 16, Day 3 (Chapters VIII-X)

1. What changes does the typhus epidemic bring upon (a) the Lowood girls, (b) Lowood School itself, (c) Brocklehurst, (d), Helen, and (e) Jane?

(a) More than half the girls are infected, and many die, partly because of the girls' already poor health from improper nutrition and cold. (b) After the typhus fever epidemic at Lowood, the public is outraged and provides for better food and living conditions. (c) Brocklehurst is shamed because of the squalid conditions there. (d) Helen suffers from tuberculosis, and dies. (e) Jane escapes the disease and feels freer: She can walk in the woods as much as she wants, and there is more food for her, since a new matron doesn't know about the miserly methods of Lowood and gives the girls more to eat.

2. Describe Helen's conversation with Jane. What does "Resurgam" mean?

One evening Jane learns from a doctor that Helen won't live much longer, and she thinks seriously about heaven and hell. She sneaks in to see Helen, desiring to talk to her one last time. Helen comforts Jane, telling her she will soon see God, and dies that evening, Jane in her arms.

Helen is buried in an unmarked mound for 15 years, but Jane says now she has a headstone that reads "Resurgam" (Latin for "I will rise again").

3. What time jump occurs? What does Jane's looking out her window represent? What does she do about it?

Jane passes eight years at Lowood, six more years as a student and two as a teacher.

Jane thinks about her life, opening a window and looking out (symbolizing her desire to see more of the world around her), desiring “liberty” and a new “Servitude.”

She decides to place an advertisement in the newspaper, writes it, and walks it to town. She receives an offer from a Mrs. Fairfax for a position in a place called Thornfield, to tutor a girl under 10 years old, and imagines what Mrs. Fairfax and Thornfield are like. She informs Lowood, gets references (Mrs. Reed wants nothing to do with Jane), and prepares to leave. Jane’s excitement and curiosity about her upcoming new life parallels her leaving Gateshead Hall.

4. Sum up Jane’s surprise visitor and what Jane learns.

Bessie visits; she is married, with a boy and a girl—named Jane! She shares news of the Reeds: Georgiana almost eloped, but was stopped by Mrs. Reed, and she lives with Eliza, always fighting; John is lazy and self-indulgent, having been kicked out of college, and is still spoiled by Mrs. Reed, who gives him money.

Bessie tells Jane she is not very pretty(!), but admires her piano playing and painting ability. She also relates this: Seven years ago one of Jane’s uncles came to Gateshead Hall looking for her; Mrs. Reed said Jane was no longer there, and her uncle left for Madeira.

Jane Eyre, Week 17, Day 1 (Chapters XI-XII)

1. What is Thornfield like? How does it compare to Gateshead and Lowood?

Thornfield is three stories, large, grey, and surrounded by thorn trees. Jane's room at first strikes her as eerie, with the nearby wide hall, large staircase, and long gallery, but she thinks it looks beautiful when she wakes up. The library/ schoolroom is furnished with books, a new piano, an easel, and two globes. The third story of Thornfield is old and antique, with rooms too gloomy to sleep in.

Answers will vary as to how Thornfield compares to Gateshead Hall and Lowood. It is potentially a difficult place to live (like Gateshead and Lowood), but Mrs. Fairfax and Adele are pleasant, and it is well furnished and more modern (e.g., the library/schoolroom is better furnished than Lowood). There are gothic elements of the home, but it is markedly unique, and it is the third major location of Jane's life.

2. Describe Mrs. Fairfax and Adele.

Mrs. Fairfax is a pleasant older housekeeper, and Adele is the ward of Mr. Edward Rochester, the owner of Thornfield; she is six or seven, not terribly bright, French, and eager to please Jane.

3. What strange sound does Jane hear one night, and what does Mrs. Fairfax inform Jane?

Jane hears a strange, cackling laugh, and asks Mrs. Fairfax about it, who answers that it was Grace Poole; when Jane sees Grace, it seems hard to believe that the laugh came from her.

4. Describe Jane's interaction with Grace Poole.

Jane hears Grace Poole laugh and make odd noises frequently, and tries to make conversation with her, but gets nowhere.

5. Why does Jane take a trip to town? What happens on her trip?

She sees life as too routine, tame, and ordinary, longing for excitement and adventure. (This recalls her looking out of the window at Lowood earlier in the story.) On her trip to town she encounters deep quiet, until she hears a horse coming, and a man and the horse he is on both fall on the ice, spraining the man's ankle. Jane enjoys a satisfaction with helping the man.

6. Who is the person she encounters, and what is he like?

He is Edward Rochester, master of Thornfield, but he pretends not to know about Thornfield and himself, asking Jane about her work at Thornfield. Rochester is about 35, has a dark face, and a stern expression—not handsome. Jane helps him back on his horse, and he rides away.

Jane Eyre, Week 17, Day 2 (Chapters XIII-XIV)

1. Describe Rochester's initial conversation with and assessment of Jane.

He asks Jane to tea, and she dresses up a little and appears before him. Jane remains calm while Rochester gruffly asks her about herself—Lowood, her family, and so on. She points out the harshness of Lowood and Brocklehurst, which surprises Rochester. He makes her play piano and examines her artwork, three watercolor paintings.

2. What three paintings does Jane show Rochester?

The three paintings are these:

- *a cloudy sea, with a sunken ship whose mast sticks out of the sea, with a cormorant who holds a golden bracelet in*

its beak, torn from the arm of a corpse, visible just below the water

- *an outdoor scene, with a woman's shape rising to the sky*
- *an iceberg tip piercing a wintry sky, with a large head leaning toward it, with a despairing look, and a white ring of flame above it, like a crown*

3. What does Jane say to Mrs. Fairfax about Rochester's personality? How does Mrs. Fairfax excuse it and explain his reluctance to stay at Thornfield for any substantial length of time?

Jane remarks to Mrs. Fairfax that Rochester seems rude, but Mrs. Fairfax excuses it because of his "painful thoughts" and "family troubles," including the loss of his older brother nine years ago, which put Thornfield into his possession. (There were some disagreements and unfair treatment by his father and older brother as well.) Mrs. Fairfax says he has not lived at Thornfield for more than two weeks at a time; when Jane asks why, she avoids the question, saying it might be because it is a gloomy place.

4. How does Jane answer when Rochester asks her to assess his looks? What earlier part of *Jane Eyre* does this recall?

He asks her if she thinks he is handsome, and she says, "No." (This echoes Bessie's earlier words to Jane that she is not pretty.)

5. Sum up Rochester's explanation of himself to Jane. How does she see his lack of good looks?

He tells Jane life has knocked him around roughly, and that he still has a conscience. He says he is hardened toward others, but still might be redeemable. Jane sees him as not handsome, but believing his confident manner makes his lack of good looks unimportant.

6. Describe the interaction between Rochester and Jane. How does Jane encourage Rochester in their conversation? What conversation that Jane had earlier in the novel is similar to this one between herself and Rochester?

He talks roughly at times, but is impressed by her intelligence and spirit. He tells Jane that he has lived a hard life, that fortune has been unkind to him, but that he is not an evil man. He says that "fate" was destined an unfortunate life for him, so he plans on a life of pleasure, which Jane warns him against.

He also says he is attempting to change his life, and Jane encourages him. She becomes confused with his rantings, however, and tries to leave; he begs her to stay until Adele comes back (she does, thanking him for his gifts). He mysteriously refers to Adele as his burden, then says he will explain more later.

This conversation between Rochester and Jane, as she warns him against evil behavior, recalls her discussion with Helen on how she wished to get revenge on those who unjustly tormented her, like Rochester believes "fate" has unjustly targeted him.

Jane Eyre, Week 17, Day 3 (Chapters XV-XVI)

1. Why do you think Jane refuses to leave Adele, knowing of her past?

Jane tells Rochester that she could never leave Adele, who is essentially an orphan (like Jane herself, which endears her to Adele).

2. What horror awakens Jane one night? How does Rochester respond?

One night, Jane hears murmuring right above her while she is in bed, but can't see anything. She hears someone touching her bedroom door and is "chilled with fear." A "demonic laugh" at her door frightens her terribly, and she hears someone going upstairs (Grace Poole) and a door closing. Jane sees smoke, realizes it is coming from Rochester's room, and quenches a fire in his bed before it kills him.

Rochester tells Jane to stay put while he visits the second story. He returns, and Jane says she heard Grace Poole laugh, and Rochester agrees that it was Grace. Jane returns to her room after Rochester thanks her profusely, and she dreams disquieting dreams of sailing in a ship to a destination she can never reach.

3. How does Jane react to Grace Poole? What can't Jane figure out?

Jane sees Grace Poole in Rochester's room, sitting. She tests Grace, who behaves suspiciously and pretends that Rochester accidentally started the fire with a candle, but encourages Jane to bolt her door every night.

Jane puzzles over why Rochester would let Grace stay, when he himself all but admitted her involvement in the fire; it can't be that he loves her, since she is older and unattractive.

4. Where does Rochester go? Why? What does Jane wonder? How does she chide herself?

Rochester has gone to visit a family with attractive daughters one of whom is named Blanche (Ingram). Mrs. Fairfax says Blanche is very eligible, with beautiful black hair and musical talents.

Jane wonders why Rochester hasn't married Blanche already. She chides herself for even hoping Rochester would ever marry or love her, when he could marry someone as beautiful and accomplished as Blanche. She draws two portraits—one of herself and one of Blanche, and looks at them to remind herself that she is no equal to Blanche.

Jane Eyre, Week 17, Day 4 (Chapter XVII)

1. What does Jane overhear about Grace Poole?

She sees Grace Poole come from the third story. Jane overhears Leah and a housecleaner discussing Grace Poole's job and huge salary, but they will not tell Jane the situation.

2. Describe the guests who come to Thornfield. What is your assessment of Blanche Ingram?

Mrs. Eshton and her two daughters (Amy and Louisa); Lady Lynn; Mrs. Colonel Dent; and Lady Ingram and her daughters (Blanche and Mary). Lady Ingram is haughty and fierce; she repulses Jane, reminding her of Mrs. Reed. The ladies talk right in front of Jane of how terrible governesses are and her physical "faults."

Jane studies Blanche to see (a) whether Mrs. Fairfax accurately described her, (b) whether her drawing of Blanche was close, and (c) whether she would meet Rochester's taste. Blanche is also haughty and mockingly laughs often. Blanche speaks of how she doesn't care how a man looks, just how he acts. (This is obviously a ploy to win the affections of the not-handsome Rochester.)

3. What does Jane decide about Rochester? What doesn't surprise her, but does disappoint her?

Rochester enters and begins conversing with the ladies without speaking to or looking at Jane, which doesn't surprise her, but does disappoint her.

After Blanche and Rochester sing, Jane slips away. Rochester then confronts her and asks why she is depressed; Jane replies that she is not, but Rochester insists that she is, especially when a tear rolls down Jane's cheek. He asks her to come every night to the drawing room with his visitors, and then almost says, "Good night, my love..." but doesn't.

She finds herself looking at Rochester with love, regardless of his less-than-handsome appearance. She decides that the other ladies have nothing in common with him, as she does.

Jane Eyre, Week 18, Day 1 (Chapters XVIII-XIX)

1. What scenarios does the group act out while playing charades? Why doesn't Jane join, and how does Blanche respond?

The charades: a wedding, finding of Rebecca for Isaac's bride, and a prison. Blanche says Jane "looks too stupid" to play.

2. How does Jane react to the interaction between Rochester and Blanche?

Jane watches them interact, close to each other, with frustration and despair, since she says she loves Rochester. She is not jealous of Blanche, since she says she is so phony and heartless, and mean to Adele. Jane notices Rochester watching Blanche too, and wonders how he can still marry her, because she sees that Blanche "could not charm him"—and she is totally clueless that her attempts are failing.

Jane can't understand how Rochester can marry Blanche, since she doesn't think Blanche will make him happy, but supposes this is how it works with the upper class. She realizes that she is overlooking the faults of Rochester, instead of being aware of them, saying, "Now I saw no bad."

3. Describe Mr. Mason's visit.

Mr. Mason says (in a non-English accent) that he is a friend of his and has traveled far to reach Thornfield. Jane notes that he looks uneasy and odd, and unmanly. Jane hears the words "old woman" and "quite troublesome" whispered.

4. Describe the gypsy's "fortune telling" of Jane.

Jane tells the fortune teller she doesn't believe in the practice; the gypsy tells her that she is "cold," "sick," and "silly," since she is alone and doesn't try for love, even though she is in reach of happiness. Jane scoffs, and the gypsy "reads" her palm, saying Jane is frustrated at the gaiety going on around her; Jane replies that she is not, and that she plans to save her money and open her own school. The gypsy mentions Grace Poole, which startles Jane, but the gypsy says Grace is harmless and trustworthy.

The gypsy asks about Jane's interest in a gentleman, to which Jane says she has none. The gypsy says that Rochester will soon marry Blanche, who might love him, or love his money. She tells Jane that happiness is within her reach, that her eye is full of feeling, her mouth should not live in silence, and that Jane is content to live alone, even though she shouldn't.

Rochester then reveals himself as the gypsy—Jane recognizes his young hand and the ring on it—and he asks Jane to forgive him. Jane had suspected the gypsy was Grace Poole, and was slightly on edge, but didn't suspect Rochester.

5. What strange thing does Rochester say to Jane after she tells him of Mr. Mason's presence?

Jane tells Rochester Mr. Mason is there from the West Indies, and this staggers Rochester. recovering himself, Rochester tests Jane's loyalty, and she says she will always stand by him, although others forsake and criticize him.

Jane Eyre, Week 18, Day 2 (Chapters XX-XXI)

1. Describe the next incident in the middle of the night at Thornfield.

Jane hears a horrific cry in the middle of the night and a cry of "Help!" from the third story. Rochester reassures the guests that a servant had a nightmare. Jane doesn't believe it, gets dressed, and is summoned by Rochester to help him to a door hidden behind a tapestry. Jane hears a snarling, snapping sound like a dog, and Grace Poole's maniacal laughter. Mr. Mason is bleeding, and Rochester tells Jane to help, and forbids Mason from talking to her.

Jane begins trying to puzzle out what is happening, and Rochester returns with the surgeon for Mason. Mason says, “She bit me” and says his attacker threatened to drain his heart of blood. Rochester rallies Mason, giving him medicine, and hurries him off before the guests awaken and see him. Before he leaves, Mason asks Rochester to take care of “her” and bursts into tears.

2. What does Rochester ask Jane the next morning?

Rochester walks with Jane in the early morning, and puts a case to her: Would she think it wrong for him to “overleap an obstacle of custom” to get his life back, after he made a grave error, ruined his life, and met a person like Blanche Ingram that could give him happiness?

3. Describe Jane’s visit. What is your take on Eliza and Georgiana?

Jane receives news that Mrs. Reed is dying, and John has died a shameful death, probably suicide, so she goes to Gateshead. Mrs. Reed is slightly better, and Jane answers Bessie’s questions about herself, realizing that it has been so long that she does not dread Gateshead and has forgiven the Reeds’ mistreatment of her.

Jane sees plain, harsh-looking Eliza and fancy-looking Georgiana, and she ignores their petty non-verbal judgements against her. She insists on being shown to Mrs. Reed, and kisses her, calling her “dear aunt” (after vowing years before never to call her “aunt”). Mrs. Reed behaves coldly toward Jane, but says she wants to tell her something. Speaking oddly, as if Jane weren’t there, she says she hated Jane because her husband was fond of Jane’s mother (his sister), and she wishes Jane would have died during the epidemic at Lowood. She also talks as if John were still alive, bemoaning his gambling and her estate’s low funds.

Ten days pass before she talks to Mrs. Reed again, and Jane passes the time drawing pictures (including one of Rochester), ignored almost totally by both Reed sisters. They show interest in Rochester’s portrait, and Jane sketches them both, also having superficial conversations with Georgiana. The sisters pass their meaningless lives differently: Georgiana searches for excitement and entertainment; Eliza rigidly orders each day. Eliza dislikes Georgiana so intensely that she tells her as soon as their mother dies, she will have nothing to do with her ever again. Georgiana replies that Eliza is heartless and selfish, and is still angry that Eliza ruined her chances to be married some years before.

4. Compare Eliza’s “religion” to what the Bible says in James 1:26-27.

Eliza still attends every church service rigidly, although she is so cold and hateful. This is not true Christianity. “If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:26-27).

5. What frustrating news does Mrs. Reed give Jane?

Mrs. Reed withheld a three-year-old letter from Jane, which says that Jane’s uncle, John Eyre from Madeira, wanted to leave her an inheritance. Mrs. Reed says, though, that she told John Eyre that Jane was dead, not bearing the chance that Jane would be prosperous.

Jane Eyre, Week 18, Day 3 (Chapters XXII-XXIV)

1. How do the “fates” of Eliza and Georgiana relate to Jane’s future?

Eliza leaves to become a nun, Georgiana marries. These “fates” are similar to Jane’s possible futures—ones with or without marriage, especially in light of the plans of Rochester to marry Blanche Ingram soon. Weeks pass, however, and no progress is made toward a marriage between Rochester and Blanche.

2. Describe the scene of the conversation between Rochester and Jane. What happens to the chestnut tree at Thornfield?

He tells her Adele must go to school, and Jane must get a “new situation,” and says he has heard of a job for her with “Mrs. Dionysius O’Gall of Bitternutt Lodge” in Ireland (a clearly ridiculous, made-up name). Jane is overwhelming with the prospect of being separated from Rochester (like her “caste” and lack of wealth also do) that tears spill.

Rochester says they will never see each other again, and asks if she would remember him again if she went to Ireland. (He is testing her to discern her feelings toward him.) Jane weeps openly, telling him she will miss him, and that Blanche Ingram has stolen her chance at future happiness, that he should not marry her, and that if she were pretty or wealthy he would be upset if she left him.

Rochester says he will not marry Blanche, because he spread a rumor that his wealth was only a third of what it actually was, and she turned against him. He kisses Jane and asks her to marry him, almost defiantly, and she accepts.

The two return to Thornfield, as a storm is brewing, and the next day Adele informs Jane that lightning has split the chestnut tree in two.

3. What plans are made? What does Jane ask Rochester about his play-acting about Blanche Ingram, and how does he respond?

Rochester and Jane plan to marry in four weeks, quietly, and then travel the world. Jane asks Rochester why he tried to make her believe he would marry Blanche Ingram, and he says he was provoking Jane to jealousy.

4. What are Mrs. Fairfax’s thoughts on the plans?

Mrs. Fairfax can scarcely believe it, saying the two are different “equalit[ies] of position and fortune”; and noting their age difference; and warning Jane, much to Jane’s dismay.

5. When Jane reflects on this time, what does she say she had wrongly done in regard to Rochester?

She says that she had wrongly made Rochester into “an idol.”

Jane Eyre, Week 19, Day 1 (Chapters XXV-XXVI)

1. Describe the weather and the chestnut tree.

The day before the wedding, Jane packs. Rochester has mysteriously left the night before and not returned. A violent storm roars, and Jane walks out in it, seeing chestnut tree split down the middle, although the halves are not split from each other. The blood-red moon appears to come between the halves.

2. What happens to Jane, and how does Rochester respond?

An unknown woman came into her room, wearing a wedding dress, and took Jane's wedding veil, ripping it in half. The woman then placed a candle at Jane's face, looking at her, and Jane fainted from terror.

Rochester tries to convince Jane that it was a dream, but she found the veil ripped, and he is horrified, thankful that nothing worse has happened to her. He says it was Grace Poole, which satisfies Jane; but he makes her sleep in Sophie's room with Adele, with the door locked.

3. Describe the wedding scene and its aftermath. What does Jane's outlook on her life recall earlier in the story?

The next morning, Jane dresses and is hurriedly taken to the church by Rochester. Jane notices two strangers following them (Rochester does not see them).

Before the vows commence, one stranger says Rochester cannot be legally married, because he has a wife living: Bertha Mason, the sister of Dick Mason (whom she attacked in the house before). Bertha is insane, coming from a long line of crazies, and Rochester was tricked into marrying her 15 years before.

Rochester takes the clergyman and lawyer to show them Bertha; she tries to strangle him. Rochester has hired Grace Poole to be Bertha's ward, keeping her hidden in the house.

Mr. Mason rushed to stop the wedding, since he was a friend of Jane Eyre's uncle, who told Mason about his niece's upcoming wedding to Rochester. (Jane's uncle is close to death.)

Jane sits in her room, alone, taking off her wedding dress, completely devoid of all hope for happiness. (This recalls her earlier time at Gateshead, especially the misery of being locked in the red room.) She feels utterly destitute, and prays to God for help, repeating Psalms that reflect her misery.

Jane Eyre, Week 19, Day 2 (Chapter XXVII)

1. Why does Jane refuse Rochester's proposition?

Rochester asks Jane to come away with him, to a remote house where they could live, but Jane refuses, courageously, on principle, since Rochester is married; they would be adulterers. Jane also resolves not to become his mistress, as those before her, and make him hate her like he grew to hate them.

2. Explain the situation that Rochester is in.

He was tricked into marrying Bertha Mason, the daughter of his father's wealthy friend, because Rochester's father wanted money for him, giving all his property to Rowland, Edward Rochester's older brother. Bertha's mother and her brother were both in insane asylums, which was hidden from Edward. Bertha soon started acting violent and insane after their marriage, and his brother and father die, leaving him his inheritance and making the "necessary" marriage to his rich wife needless. After a particularly violent and foul-mouthed outburst from Bertha, Rochester moves to England, where no one knows his secret, so he can live as unmarried and hide Bertha from the world.

3. What is Grace Poole's role? How has she endangered the entire Thornfield household?

Grace Poole was hired by Rochester and paid to guard Bertha; Grace got drunk, though, several times, allowing Bertha to obtain the knife she stabbed her brother with, and to get out twice—once setting fire to Edward’s bed, and once going into Jane’s room and ripping her veil.

4. Why does Jane do what she does, and what does she tell herself? Describe the vision she sees.

Jane refuses to stay with Edward, although he begs her. She tells herself: “I will keep the law given by God, sanctioned by man” and “Laws and principles are not for the times when there is no temptation: they are for such moments as this.” She then walks away from him.

After sleeping, and seeing a vision that says “Flee temptation!” she hurriedly packs and leaves in the middle of the night. She walks until she sees a coach, paying her entire savings to have the driver take her far away.

Jane Eyre, Week 19, Day 3 (Chapters XXVIII-XXIX)

1. Sum up Jane’s predicament in Whitcross.

Jane is alone and destitute in a little area called Whitcross. She eats her last morsel and sleeps on the ground. She awakens and sees the stars, thinks of God’s greatness, and prays for Edward. The next morning, she walks to town, drawn by a church bell, hungry and looking for work. She finds nothing and goes to a parsonage, but the clergyman is gone to bury his father and will not return for two weeks. She returns to a bakery and is refused, though a farmer gives her some bread, and she eats porridge intended for a pig.

2. Describe the Rivers family. What do they do for Jane?

They have lived in their house for about 200 years; St. John, Diana, and Mary all love to learn—St. John went to college to become a parson, and the girls wanted to be governesses. St. John is about 30 and handsome, but stern-looking. The sisters are cultured and kind-hearted. But their father lost everything to a man he trusted, and the three children had to provide for themselves. They all enjoy the little town they live in, and get along very well.

Jane drifts in and out of sleep for three days, hearing the sisters comment on her looks and bearing, never regretting their decision to take her in, which comforts her. The two and St. John comment on her “physiognomy” favorably, although St. John says she is “not at all handsome.”

After several days of rest, Jane finds her clothes and stockings washed. They ask Jane about herself, and she says she has no friends or family, is single, and almost 19; she is upset and sheds tears when they ask her about marriage. She shares her whole background, leaving out details she wants to keep secret.

St. John realizes the “Elliott” last name Jane gives is false (which Jane confirms), and Jane thanks them and asks for work to help repay them and earn her keep. The Riverses agree to let her stay with them, and St. John says he will help her to find work.

Jane Eyre, Week 19, Day 4 (Chapters XXX-XXXI)

1. How does Jane find the Rivers siblings?

She gets along almost perfectly with the Rivers sisters, finding much in common. The girls are more well-read than Jane, but she is a better artist. St. John is difficult to get along with, moody, and distant. Jane is impressed with his preaching, although his stern Calvinism is depressing, and he seems unsatisfied, like Jane (who has lost her home and potential husband).

2. What work decisions do the Rivers sisters and Jane accept? What news gives them temporary hope, then disappointment?

Diana and Mary plan to leave home to become governesses. Jane approaches St. John about work, and he offers her a job teaching poor girls; she accepts.

St. John brings news that their uncle John has died (the uncle that gave the Riverses' father bad financial advice. The three Rivers siblings hoped he would leave them an inheritance to atone for his error, but he leaves them almost nothing, leaving 20,000 pounds to another relative.

3. Describe Jane's work. What does St. John tell Jane about his life?

Jane works with 20 ignorant, illiterate students, and looks forward to seeing the fruits of her labors with them. She feels more satisfied with this life than one living as a mistress of Edward Rochester, but she weeps, thinking about him. St. John comes and brings drawing materials from his sisters, noticing Jane's tears.

St. John encourages Jane to be strong and stay with her job, telling her he struggled with being in the ministry a year ago, longing for adventure and glory, until he overcame this wanderlust, planning to become a missionary in the East.

4. What is strange about St. John's response to Rosamond Oliver?

Jane is struck by Rosamond's incredible beauty, as well as her pleasant personality (unlike Blanche Ingram's), and she wonders if St. John is attracted to her, since she (Rosamond) seems to be to him. But he shows little interest, not even coming with her to visit her father, who wants to see him.

Jane Eyre, Week 20, Day 1 (Chapters XXXII-XXXIII)

1. How does Jane's work make her feel? What upsets this feeling?

Jane sees success with her students, and realizes that they and their parents greatly appreciate being treated respectfully and to have someone care about their feelings; the town loves her. She feels happy and content with her work, but has numerous dreams about Rochester.

2. Describe Rosamond's personality and actions. What do you make of St. John's reaction to her? How does he react to Jane's drawing?

Rosamond Oliver tries to win St. John, but he resists her, determined to be a missionary, and strangely, seeming to want to be unhappy in a way. Rosamond is pleasant, but not deep, a little spoiled, but not very much, and not arrogant because of her wealth. (Her fruitless attempts to win St. John recall Blanche Ingram's similar attempts to win Rochester.)

Jane sketches Rosamond's portrait, and Mr. Oliver comes to watch, telling Jane that the River family was once rich and highly regarded in Morton. St. John visits one day and is startled by Rosamond's portrait, although he pretends not to notice. Jane is determined to get answers from him, and asks if he wants the portrait; he says he does, but he shouldn't. He tells Jane that he loves Rosamond, but cannot marry her, because they would regret it soon. (This mirrors Jane's refusing to be Rochester's mistress.) He refuses to accept Jane's gift of the portrait.

3. What unusual act does St. John perform with a piece of paper?

As St. John is telling Jane that he is a hard, cold man, but determined to use his gifts in God's service, for His kingdom, he suddenly sees something on a piece of paper, looking strangely at Jane and tearing off the corner and putting it into his pocket.

4. Sum up St. John's "story" to Jane during the hard snowstorm. What does Jane decide to do about this?

St. John comes to Jane's house during a hard snow to tell her something, which he waits a long time to do. He finally relates Jane's entire history, saying that a Mr. Briggs has tried contact her to tell her that her Uncle John Eyre from Madeira has died and left her rich.

Jane is stunned, and asks St. John how he came to be told this business, and he replies that his mother was Jane Eyre's father's sister. Jane is thrilled to have "two sisters." (Diana and Mary are superior versions of Eliza and Georgiana.)

Jane decides to split the 20,000 pounds four ways, among herself and St. John, Diana, and Mary, and live with her "sisters." She tells St. John she will never marry, and has the money legally divided.

Jane Eyre, Week 20, Day 2 (Chapter XXXIV)

1. Sum up Jane's new plans, and St. John's rebuke.

Jane leaves her school (promising to teach at least once a week). She sets up her new life, asking St. John to let her and Diana and Mary have Hannah. St. John asks her what her life's ambition will be now. She answers that she will clean Moor House and make Christmas wonderful; St. John, of course, means for the rest of her life, warning her not to waste her talents on only earthly things, but for the kingdom of God.

Jane turns Moor House inside out, making it sparkle. She invites St. John, who barely mentions approval, which disappoints Jane, who believes he would make a difficult husband for any wife.

2. What are St. John's plans? Why does he say he is thankful for Rosamond Oliver's news?

His sisters ask him if he has changed his plans because of the inheritance that Jane split among them, and he replies that he has not, and will leave within the year for the mission field. He tells them that Rosamond Oliver is soon to marry someone else, and tells Jane later that he is thankful, since it clears him to go to the mission field without Rosamond.

St. John seems to watch Jane often, and comments that she has much strength and chides his sisters for not going out when the weather is bad, saying that Jane can do it. He asks Jane to learn Hindustani with him, and she finds herself losing her “liberty of mind” under him, and growing serious and cold as he is.

3. Whom does Jane write? What does St. John request after her letters are not answered?

Jane thinks of Rochester, writing twice to Mrs. Fairfax about him, but receiving no reply after six months. After receiving a letter which is only from Briggs, Jane weeps, and St. John invites/orders her to take a walk with him.

4. How does Jane respond to St. John’s request? What three things does he say qualify her?

St. John asks Jane to be his wife and come with him to India. Jane says she is not qualified, but St. John says her humility is unwarranted—that she is qualified if she would be willing to let God use her. (The reference to humility recalls Brocklehurst’s statement saying exactly the same thing before he took Jane to Lowood.)

St. John says that her (a) taking on the schoolteacher’s job, (b) clear-headedness when she inherited great wealth, and (c) willingness to learn Hindustani qualify her to be a missionary’s wife.

5. Explain Jane’s condition on which she will agree to St. John’s request, and his answer.

Jane agrees to go, but only as his sister, not his wife, since St. John is so hard and unfeeling, and she knows he doesn’t really love her. This is intolerable for St. John, who says God needs her—to which Jane tells him he (St. John) does not. She tells him she scorns his idea of “love” and again refuses. He says he is going to visit friends for two weeks and will return, and that if she does not come with him as his wife, she is denying God—not him.

Jane Eyre, Week 20, Day 3 (Chapters XXXV-XXXVI)

1. How does the final parting of St. John and Jane go? What stops Jane from accepting his proposal?

St. John stays another week instead of leaving right away, as he said he would; he is cold and disapproving of Jane, which torments her. Jane attempts to leave on friendly terms with him, but he is shocked when she reiterates that she will not become his wife. Jane says he is pretending to be shocked and certainly knows better.

St. John tells her he will find a married couple to accompany to the mission field, so she won’t break a promise, but she reminds him that no such promise exists, and that she might do more good in England. St. John chides her for wanting to find out what happened to Rochester and walks away.

Diana asks Jane what is happening, and Jane explains; Diana says that Jane wouldn’t last three months, since St. John would work her to death. As St. John reads Revelation 21 at the evening meal, it is clear he believes Jane is bound for hell.

Later St. John asks Jane to marry him, and she is on the verge of accepting, when she hears Rochester call “Jane! Jane!” She rushes outside, sees no one, tells St. John to leave her, and kneels and prays.

2. Describe the scene at the end of Jane’s trip. What does she learn from the innkeeper?

She travels 36 hours by coach to Thornfield, but doesn’t ask anyone about Rochester, because she doesn’t want her hopes crushed yet. She approaches Thornfield and sees it has burned to the ground.

A local innkeeper tells Jane the story: Bertha burned it down two months after Jane left (trying to set Jane's room on fire), jumped to her death, and Rochester has pined for Jane since she left. Rochester lost an eye and the sight of the other, as well as one hand, in the fire. Jane requests an immediate trip to his new home, 30 miles away.

Jane Eyre, Week 20, Day 4 (Chapters XXXVII-XXXVIII)

1. What is Ferndean like? How is this appropriate?

It is dank, gloomy, and desolate, representing Rochester's outlook and "fate."

2. Describe the reunion. How does Rochester say God intervened in their lives?

Jane knocks on the door, and Mary and John are surprised. They announce her as a visitor, and she slowly reveals herself to the overjoyed Rochester. Jane tells him she is wealthy and offers to stay as his nursemaid forever, and she realizes Rochester wants to marry her, but doesn't want to chain her to himself, a "sightless block," as he says.

Rochester shows Jane his stump and remarks how ugly he is, with that and his scarred face (he can see dim lights out of his one good eye), but it doesn't matter to Jane. (When Rochester asks, "Am I hideous, Jane?" she answers, "Very, sir: you always were, you know.") He asks her about where she's been, and she gives short replies, so as not to stir him up, since she wants to cheer him that night, promising to tell him the rest the next morning.

She does so, and Rochester is especially interested in St. John, believing Jane loves him. When she says she does not, he is overwhelmed, and a tear trickles from his eye. He asks her to marry him, and she accepts gladly. (This, interestingly, puts Jane in a "helper" position somewhat, similar to what a marriage to St. John would have been. The difference: Rochester loves her, and St. John did not.)

Rochester tells Jane he is thankful that God took her away from him, to chastise his wickedness and pride of his strength, and that God was just. He has submitted to God, and prays for His guidance.

3. What is eerie about Rochester's calling out for Jane several nights before?

Rochester tells Jane that four nights ago, at around midnight, he called out "Jane! Jane!" and heard a voice saying, "I am coming; wait for me. Where are you?" This, of course, is what Jane dreamed she heard at the same time. Rochester kneels down and prays that God will guide his life.

4. Sum up the conclusion of *Jane Eyre*. How much time has passed?

Jane marries Rochester. Diana and Mary are overjoyed; Diana says she will visit soon. St. John never responds to Jane's letter saying she married Rochester, but does write six months later, not mentioning it. Jane takes Adele away from the harsh, strict school she is in (recalling Jane's stay at Lowood) and puts her in a closer, more comfortable school; Adele thrives.

Jane has now been married 10 years. She served as Rochester's vision, loving to do it, and their constant conversation draws them close. Rochester gains back some of the sight of one eye, and is able to see the son born to him and Jane.

*Diana and Mary both are married and visit Jane and Edward yearly. St. John works on the mission field and remains unmarried, and never will, since he is near death. *Jane Eyre* ends with a quotation by St. John from the last lines of the Bible:*

"Surely I come quickly! Amen; even so come, Lord Jesus!"