

American Literature for Christian Homeschoolers

Answer Key to Review Questions

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Week 1, Day 1:

Letter to the Town of Providence

1. In the first sentence, what does Roger Williams say should be the goals of the “Town-Meetings”?

To increase the liberty, peace, and the welfare of the inhabitants of Rhode Island.

2. What does Roger Williams say is incorrect about what his brother wrote were his (Roger’s) beliefs?

Roger Williams says that he does not, as his brother says he does, claim that the law cannot punish evildoers of any kind—that the law does not provide for an “infinite liberty of conscience.”

3. What are the “two hinges” of liberty of conscience that Williams supports?

No one is forced to come to any worship service led by another group, and no one is forced to stop worshipping the way he sees fit.

4. What is the duty of the ship’s captain in Williams’s analogy? To what does the captain compare to?

The captain’s duty is to maintain justice and peace among the passengers. The captain refers to the civil government of a state.

To My Dear and Loving Husband

1. Sum up the main ideas of the Bible passages referenced in “To My Dear and Loving Husband.”

Man and wife are designed by God to become one; fearing God is more to be desired than gold.

2. List the ways Anne Bradstreet loves her husband and what she compares her love to.

She prizes his love more than gold and all the “riches of the East”; her love is a fire that can’t be quenched; she can’t ever repay his love to her.

3. What do the last two lines of the poem mean?

That Anne Bradstreet and her husband should so love each other that it proves that they are followers of Christ and will live with Him forever in heaven.

Week 1, Day 2: Letter to Richard Turner, Letter to the Indians, and Letter to the (Philadelphia) Free Society of Traders

1. Why does William Penn ask the king (Charles II) to change the name of the land grant from “Pennsylvania” to something else?

Penn believes it looks vain to name it after himself.

2. What plans does Penn have for Pennsylvania?

He prays God will make it a “great nation,” and plans to lay it out well for its settlers.

3. Sum up Penn's opening in his "Letter to the Indians."

There is a "Great God" who has commanded us to love one another, we will all give an account of our deeds.

4. How does Penn attempt to win friendship and trust with the Indians?

He says that he knows many other colonists have treated them wrongly, but he will not do so, and if any of the inhabitants of Pennsylvania wrong Indians, then there will be a righteous judgment made and matters settled the right way.

5. In his letter to the Free Society of Traders, what does Penn note about the local tribes' beliefs and practices that are similar to a Christian's? How are they different?

They believe in a God, and that when they die they shall live again, and they have "worship services." They still, however, make sacrifices to their "god," which is no longer needed, since Jesus became the only sacrifice for sins that God will accept (Ephesians 5:1-2, Hebrews 10:1-12, Jude 1:3).

6. List several ways that Penn admonishes his people to treat the Indians. For what purpose?

Penn says to have an equal number of arbitrators (six) on each side in case of a dispute, not to abuse them, and to be fair to them. He prays that the Christian settlers will be obedient to God's will regardless of what happens, so that the Indians might become Christians.

Week 1, Day 3: Rip Van Winkle

1. What details about the story's *setting* (time and place) are established in the first few paragraphs?

It is in the Catskill Mountains in New York, and it is set in the American colonial times when America was under British rule.

2. Describe Rip Van Winkle's character traits, his relationship with his wife, and how he gets along with the villagers.

He is a willing worker; he gets along with everyone (even dogs!), but his relationship with his wife suffers because he neglects the needs of his own house, mostly his farm, which is in terrible shape. His wife acts like a "shrew," constantly nagging him because of this. In response to her nagging, Rip just shrugs his shoulders and avoids arguing with her.

3. How does Rip Van Winkle typically escape his wife?

He goes off to the inn and discusses issues with other men, or goes hunting in the woods.

4. Describe the hunting trip that sets in motion the story's main plot device, and give details on what happens when Rip awakens. How is his arrival back at the village unsettling?

Rip goes hunting, hears thunder in the sky, and then hears a voice call his name and sees someone. It is an older, short man who seems somewhat familiar to Rip, carrying a keg of beer, who leads him to an open spot in the woods surrounded by high cliffs and trees, and where a number of others—dressed like the old man and somewhat odd-looking—are playing games, although their faces are grave, and they don't speak. The only sound is the sound of their bowling game, which sounds like thunder. They sit and stare at Rip for a little while, then return to their games and drinking. Rip then joins them in drinking, and he falls asleep.

He sees his gun rusted, Wolf is gone, his joints are stiff, the dry mountain gully now has water flowing in it, and he feels hungry for breakfast. Rip doesn't recognize any of the villagers, which is strange, because he knew almost everyone. The villagers' dress is different. When they all stroke their chins, he feels that he has a long beard. Children don't run to him, and dogs bark at him. There are many new people.

5. Describe Rip's arrival at his house and his exploration of the village. What shocking news does he learn when he asks about his friends? How do the villagers respond when he asks if anybody knows Rip Van Winkle?

It is broken down and dilapidated, empty, his wife is not there. The village inn is gone, and a new building is in its place, with a new owner. The tree has been replaced by a flagpole with an American flag. The picture of King George has been replaced with a picture of George Washington. Politicians ask him about his political beliefs, and he is accused of being a "tory" when he says, "God bless King George." Rip learns that many of his friends have been dead for years, or missing, or have had other drastic changes to their lives. The villagers point to Rip's son when Rip asks if anyone knows his name.

6. What relative does Rip see who fills him in on what has happened? How does Peter Vanderdonk help?

His daughter Judith tells him that Rip Van Winkle went missing 20 years ago, and that his wife has died, from blowing a blood vessel while screaming at a merchant! Peter Vanderdonk assures the villagers that it is indeed Rip Van Winkle returned. He says that it must have been Hendrick Hudson's spirit that Rip had seen in the opening, corroborating the nine-pins game and the sound of thunder.

7. Explain the story's conclusion.

Rip goes home to live with his daughter's family. His son follows in his steps, lazily living out his life around the village. Rip makes new friends and discovers that since he is old, he can get away with being lazy without criticism. He learns about the American Revolution and other events he missed while asleep, and retells his story until practically everyone in the village knows it by heart.

8. What does the sentence "there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was—petticoat government" mean? What does the last sentence mean when it says that the henpecked husbands wish for "a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon"?

Rip didn't care about politics, but he didn't like living under the "rule" of his nagging wife.

The village's henpecked husbands long for lives without nagging wives.

9. How does Irving make "Rip Van Winkle" a specifically American tale?

The setting establishes it in the Catskill Mountains (the description of the mountains and the weather make it interesting for readers who don't live in America or know about that particular geography). The American colonists have a certain way of thinking that is demonstrated in the way they talk, especially when Rip wakes up and sees the American flag on the pole and a picture of George Washington, and when the crowd almost tears him apart for saying he is loyal to King George. There are various mentions of Congress and the American Revolution.

Week 2, Day 1: Epistle of Caution and Advice, Concerning the Buying and Keeping of Slaves

1. Who are the two main groups of persons Benezet addresses in this epistle?

Christians considering buying slaves, and Christians who own slaves.

2. List some reasons that Benezet cautions against Christians owning slaves in the second paragraph.

It violates the command of Jesus in Luke 6:31, it is not consistent with Christianity to own other humans whom violence and kidnapping has brought, it hardens the heart, and it reduces love, meekness, and charity.

3. What other considerations for not owning slaves does Benezet make his audience aware of?

How horrible it is for them to be kidnapped, taken away from their families, how it leads to further importation of slaves, and how the Bible refers to “menstealers.”

4. What does Benezet say to those Christians who presently own slaves?

To treat them as human beings with souls, not just as free workers, to watch for their souls, and to set them up so if and when they are freed, they are able to make “proper use of their liberty.” But most importantly, to free them if there is any reason not to keep them (of which he lists several).

Week 2, Day 2: The Way to Wealth

1. Why is Benjamin Franklin not bothered at all by the lack of peer recognition?

He realized that the people loved him, since (a) they bought his books by the thousands, and (b) he was quoted by others.

2. Sum up the meaning of several of “Father Abraham’s” adages.

Our wealth can be taxed by idleness; don’t sleep too much; get up early; work hard, since it is profitable and honorable; steady work produces good results; if you want leisure time, use your work time well.

3. What does the poem about the oft-removed tree mean?

That people should stay settled, and they will thrive; that the idea that success is “somewhere else” is false.

4. Explain the adages on frugality.

Not to waste money on vices; to forego the most expensive clothing and foods; not to buy things you don’t need, so you go without things you do need, etc.

5. Explain the adages “A ploughman on his legs is higher than a gentleman on his knees” and “Little boats should keep near shore.”

A hard worker who is thought of as “lower” than a “gentleman” is actually often above him, since sometimes “gentlemen” are too proud to work, and are reduced to begging. The “little boats” adage admonishes the poor not to try to imitate the rich and be “lost at sea,” so to speak.

6. What does Franklin say about debt and charity?

It enslaves a person, making him dread the repayment, making him ashamed to be seen, turning him into someone who is not free. He also says that a person should stay humble in the midst of success, and give to those in need.

7. Explain the humor in the last paragraph. How does Franklin “take his own advice”?

The people agree heartily, then turn around and totally ignore his advice. Franklin decides then not to buy a new coat, and instead use the one he has for another season.

8. How does what the Bible says about work in the book of Proverbs compare to Franklin’s admonitions? (See for example Proverbs 6:6-11, 10:4-5, 13:4, 15:19, 20:4, 13, 23:4-5, 24:30-34.)

Proverbs 6:6-11 – *Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.*

Proverbs 10:4-5 – *He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.*

Proverbs 13:4 – *The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.*

Proverbs 15:19 – *The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.*

Proverbs 20:4 – *The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.*

Proverbs 20:13 – *Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.*

Proverbs 23:4-5 – *Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.*

Proverbs 24:30-34 – *I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man.*

Week 2, Day 3: The Minister’s Black Veil

1. What adjectives describe the children, young men, and maidens in the first paragraph? How are they described later?

Bright, spruce, pretty. Afraid, upset, uneasy.

2. What is Hooper like in appearance and character? What does the veil conceal?

Wears a black veil, but neat, about 30 years old, not married. The veil conceals his face, except for his mouth and chin.

3. Describe how the parishioners react to Mr. Hooper’s veil.

They are repulsed, frightened, and baffled. They call him “mad” and “awful.” One woman faints and has to be taken away. Men and women feel a disturbance when they see it.

4. How is Hooper’s sermon at the story’s beginning? What is the subject?

More powerful than usual. It affects the congregation tremendously. The subject is secret sins.

5. What two strange sights do viewers claim to have seen at the young lady’s funeral?

That the young lady’s corpse shuddered at seeing Mr. Hooper in his veil, and that Mr. Hooper was walking with the maiden’s spirit after the funeral.

6. How is the bride described at the wedding Mr. Hooper officiates? Why does this sound familiar? Explain what Mr. Hooper does when he sees himself in the mirror.

She has cold fingers and is deathly pale—just like the maiden who was earlier buried. Hooper gasps and is upset at his appearance, quickly leaving the wedding.

7. Why do you think no one asks Mr. Hooper about his veil for so long? What does the group of men who decide to ask him about the veil end up doing? Explain Elizabeth’s attempt.

Answers will vary. The deputation doesn’t get anywhere with Hooper, because the veil seems to “hang down before his heart,” and they are too embarrassed to continue. Elizabeth asks him to remove it, but he refuses, saying that there is a time when all our veils will be removed. Hooper says the veil is a “type and a symbol” that can never be removed, and that it represents his sorrow.

8. What two reactions does Hooper notice of people now when he takes walks? How does Hooper himself react to his veil?

Either they run away from him, or jump in his way. Hooper hates the sight of it, to the extent that he avoids mirrors altogether.

9. What one benefit does the veil afford Mr. Hooper?

It gives him power in helping people who are in agony over their sin. Hooper’s black veil makes him appear to sympathize with them more greatly.

10. Describe Hooper’s death and the sight he sees right before he dies.

Other ministers and Elizabeth are there for him. He is concerned that his veil might slip aside. Mr. Clark tries to get him to take it off, but Hooper refuses. He chides the people for keeping themselves away from each other and from God, and sees veils on all of THEIR faces!

11. What is the significance of the old woman’s saying at the story’s beginning: “He has changed himself into something awful only by hiding his face”? Explain the significance of the author’s words about Mr. Hooper: “Love and sympathy could never reach him.”

These sum up the story’s theme: hiding our true selves and faults/sins from others.

12. Name the verb that often is used to show how people react to the veil.

“Shudder.”

13. What do you believe is the *moral* of this parable? (See for example Mark 15:33-38, 1 Timothy 2:5-6, Galatians 6:2, and James 5:16.)

Jesus made a way to cleanse all people of their sins; his coming “tore the temple veil in two” and made a way to come directly to God. Christians are to bear one another’s burdens and confess their faults to each other. Secret sins only isolate ourselves from others.

Week 3, Day 2: On Being Brought from Africa to America,” “On Virtue

1. In “On Being Brought from Africa to America,” what is unusual about Phyllis Wheatley’s view of being sold into slavery?

She says it is a blessing, not a curse, because through it she learned about God and Jesus Christ.

2. Who is speaking in the line that is in quotes?

Ignorant, prejudiced persons who do not like black people.

3. What is sad about Wheatley’s reminder to Christians over the last two lines? See for example Acts 17:26-28.

Christians should already know that all people were created by God in His image (and of “one blood”), and that people of all nations may find God if they seek after Him.

4. Write brief definitions for the poetic terms *apostrophe*, *iambic pentameter*, and *blank verse*. Which term applies to both poems? Which two terms apply only to “On Virtue”?

An apostrophe is a work in which the author “speaks” to a person or object or other thing that cannot respond; iambic pentameter is a term for a line of poetry with five beats, with the stress coming on the second syllable of each of the five beats; blank verse is unrhymed iambic pentameter. Iambic pentameter applies to both poems (there are a few lines in “On Virtue” that are not in iambic pentameter); the other two terms apply only to “On Virtue.”

5. What does the poet say that virtue is like in “On Virtue”? Where does she say that virtue originates?

Virtue is a “bright jewel,” high and deep, heavenly, and originates from heaven.

6. What does Wheatley compare virtue to in “On Virtue”? Where does she say that virtue originates?

She speaks to her soul, telling it not to despair, because virtue is close at hand.

7. List several things that the poet asks of virtue.

To spread its wings, to come close to her, to help her resist temptation throughout her “youthful years,” to leave her not “to the false joys of time,” to “guide [her] steps,” to “teach [her] a better strain,” and so on.

Week 3, Day 3: Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death!

1. In the first paragraph, Patrick Henry says that the question before the House is a choice between what two things for (a) the country, and (b) for himself?

He claims that for America it is a choice between freedom and slavery; for himself, he says it is a choice between betraying his country and God, or remaining faithful to them.

2. What does Henry say is the “one lamp by which my feet are guided”? What does he mean by this? How does this statement compare to Psalm 119:105?

The “one lamp” is his experience; he means that experience is his most trusted resource in telling him what he should do, and that he believes that America’s last 10 years of experience with the British tells them that they cannot count on them. David, on the other hand, says that God’s Word is a “lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

3. To what does Henry charge the British in light of their putting soldiers into the American colonies? What does he say is the only resort for Americans?

Henry says it is for Britain to “force us to submission.” He says the only choice they have is to go to war with the British.

4. Find and write down the references to God that Henry uses. What is your take on how he inserts God into his speech?

- *“fulfill the great responsibility we hold to God and our country”*
- *an appeal to “the God of hosts”*
- *the “God of nature” has placed means to fight in their power*
- *“There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations; and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us.”*
- *“Forbid it [chains and slavery], Almighty God!*

Student reactions to Henry’s references to God will vary.

5. Give some examples of emotional appeal to the audience and hyperbole that Patrick Henry uses to make the speech more effective.

- *“lying supinely on our backs”*
- *“hugging the delusive phantom of hope”*
- *enemies that “[bind] us hand and foot”*
- *“There is no retreat but in submission and slavery.”*
- *“Our chains are forged!”*

6. Sum up the main points of the last paragraph.

There is no way to avoid the matter; we must fight, because there is no peace; the war has already begun. If we have to choose “slavery” over death, I choose death!

7. How might a Christian respond to these two statements from Patrick Henry: (a) We must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!” and (b) “There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations; and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us.”

On one hand, Henry says that we have no choice but to fight. But if God presides over the destinies of nations, why would we need to fight?

Week 3, Day 4: The Purloined Letter

1. Give details of the story's setting. Who is the narrator of the story?

Dupin and his friend are sitting in their apartment in Paris, silently passing an hour. The narrator is Dupin's friend.

2. What are Dupin and Monsieur G like?

Dupin is calculating, logical, and slightly impatient; Monsieur G is the Parisian police chief, not too bright (he calls everything he doesn't understand "odd").

3. How is Dupin prophetic when he remarks at the story's beginning: "Perhaps the mystery is a little too plain"?

The mystery of the letter is solved in discovering that it is a "simple" solution—that it is right out in the open.

4. How is the letter purloined?

The lady to whom it was written was reading it and was forced to leave it out in the open when someone walked into her room, in order to avoid drawing attention to it. Minister D— saw who the letter was addressed to and took advantage of the situation to steal it. Minister D— steals it by replacing the letter with one that was similar.

5. List the steps that Prefect G has taken to recover the letter.

He has had every inch of Minister D—'s apartment searched, and has had Minister D himself searched under the guise of being robbed.

6. What shocks Dupin's friend and the Prefect a month or so after the Prefect first meets with Dupin to discuss the case of the purloined letter?

Dupin hands him the letter for part of the Prefect's reward.

7. Explain how Dupin compares a schoolboy guessing game to the solving of the crime.

Dupin attempts to put himself in the shoes of the thief, as the winning schoolboy puts himself in the shoes of those boys from whom he wins marbles. The Prefect, he says, did not do this, but merely used the normal police methods to find the letter, which is why he failed.

8. Sum up Dupin's "mathematician vs. poet" argument. Where does Minister D— hide the letter, and why?

Dupin says that Minister D— was more than just a logical thinker; he was poetic, and his method of devising a hiding place for the letter could not have been determined by simply applying logical principles, as if solving the mystery of letter's location were the same as solving an algebraic problem. Minister D— hides the letter in plain view, to confound what he knows will be the police's method of investigation.

9. How does Dupin actually retrieve the letter from Minister D—'s apartment?

In disguise, he visits Minister D—'s apartment, sees a letter carelessly laid aside, and realizes that this is the purloined letter, since the letter is so obviously dirty and torn, which is not typical of Minister D—'s habits. He memorizes the look of the letter, exits (leaving his snuff box), returns supposedly for the snuff box, arranges for an outside distraction, and recovers the letter, replacing it with a close facsimile, on which he writes a taunting note to Minister D—, who has wronged him in the past.

10. What does Dupin's manner of discussing the case with his friend do for the reader? How does Poe's method of having Dupin's *friend* tell the story affect the reader?

Dupin sounds a little pompous when he discusses his method of solving the mystery of the purloined letter. Having Dupin's friend ask questions and obviously come across as less logical and intelligent as Dupin helps the reader sympathize with Dupin's friend, which makes the conclusion of the story seem less like a lecture.

11. If you are familiar with Sherlock Holmes, name some of the ways that you think Holmes creator Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was influenced by Poe.

Like Sherlock Holmes, Dupin smokes, has an arrogant personality, and is often seen with his friend Dr. Watson (who also writes about the detective's cases, like Dupin's narrator friend). The police in Sherlock Holmes stories are often inept and clueless compared to Holmes.

Week 4, Day 1: The Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson

1. Describe the Indian attack. What happens to Mary Rowlandson and her children and neighbors?

Settlers are killed by being shot and tomahawked, houses are burned to the ground, and captives taken. Mary Rowlandson is shot through the side, and the same bullet goes through the hand and bowels of the child she is holding. Out of 37 settlers, 24 are taken captive, and the rest killed.

2. In what two ways does Robert Peppers help comfort Mary Rowlandson? What does she thank God for after her daughter dies?

Rowlandson is comforted simply to talk to another captive, and he shows her how to use oak leaves to press against her wound for some relief. She thanks God that He kept her mind sane, so that even in her great distress, she did not kill herself.

3. How does God answer Rowlandson's prayer after her distress at not being allowed to see her daughter Mary?

She sees her son Joseph, who encourages her, and an Indian gives her a Bible to read.

Week 4, Day 2

1. Describe how Rowlandson is "toughened up" on the journey with the Indians.

She is able to ride farther and endure pain; she is able to eat what she first could not (calling it "trash"), even to the point of eating half-cooked horse's liver!

2. Describe how Rowlandson earns money and provisions while camped.

The other Indians ask her to sew for them, and they pay her in money or food.

3. Explain the two main ways that the Bible is a comfort to Mary Rowlandson.

First, her opportunity to read a Bible during her captivity, and second, the Bible verses she remembers and that come to her mind during appropriate situations.

4. What is baffling about the overall behavior of the Indians toward Mary Rowlandson, given the situation? What do you make of this?

They seem gentle and concerned for Mary Rowlandson's health and safety, trading and talking to her and giving her food—as if she hasn't been kidnapped and her family members killed! Probably some or many of the Indians (at least the squaws) did not favor the war, or at least could not do anything about it.

Week 4, Day 3

1. How does Rowlandson find out that her husband is not dead or captured? What good news does she receive when she crosses the Banquang River?

Thomas Read, a new captive, tells her that he is alive and well, although sad. She receives news that she must get ready, because she might be ransomed.

2. Explain Mary Rowlandson's dilemma on how much ransom money to tell the Indians to ask for her. Soon after, what makes her fear that the ransom will not be forthcoming?

She doesn't want to tell the Indians too high an amount of money, for fear of her husband's not being able to procure it, but she doesn't want to tell one that's too low, thinking they might kill her for not being worth much. When a battle occurs at Sudbury, with many Englishmen killed, the Indians say the English will now be too angry to ransom any captives.

Week 4, Day 4

1. What points does Mary Rowlandson make in thinking back upon her captivity?

That God watched over her, that He provided for her, and that she was forced to rely on His providence and care.

2. What emotions does Mary Rowlandson experience after being ransomed? How has the experience changed her?

Thankfulness, tempered with sadness for the loss of Sarah and wondering where her son Joseph and daughter Mary were, love and a desire for God to bless those who took her in and paid her ransom. She now is more aware of God's presence in her life, and believes more strongly that the Lord gives strength to those who endure hardships in life.

Notes:

- There have apparently been Indian troubles before, since the dogs know to attack Indians if they show up on the land.
- The Indians speak English, since Mary Rowlandson refuses to go with them until they promise not to hurt her.
- Rowlandson's comments on smoking are humorous: even though she smoked a pipe several times her-self, she refuses to take one from King Philip, saying, "Surely there are many who may be better employed than to lie sucking a stinking tobacco-pipe."
- The narrative's last lines are significant: "I have learned to look beyond present and smaller troubles, and to be quieted under them. As Moses said, 'Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord'" (Exodus 14:13).

Week 5, Day 2: A Handful of Clay

1. What does the Bible say on the topic raised in “A Handful of Clay” in Isaiah 64:8 and Galatians 6:9? Write a brief summary.

Isaiah 64:8 – But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

Galatians 6:9 – And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

We’re God’s work, and He has a purpose for us; we should press on, even if it seems as if we don’t have a glamorous purpose, if we do God’s work, we’ll reap rewards—maybe just in the next life, if not in this one.

2. Give an example of a person (someone you know, someone you’ve read about, someone in the Bible) who has experienced what the clay experienced in this story.

Answers will vary!

Week 5, Day 2: Fables

Ade puts a sarcastic “moral” at the end of each of these fables that is certainly *not* the real moral. Write your own one-sentence “moral” for each fable that tells what Ade is *really* trying to say.

Answers will vary!

Week 5, Day 3: Gardening Notes

1. Name one or two funny things Benchley points out about gardening.
2. Have you ever attacked a task, but after going at it for a while, felt like it was a disaster? What happened?
3. Why do you think Benchley was such a popular author?

Answers will vary!

Week 5, Day 4: Pigs Is Pigs

1. List several examples of humor in “Pigs Is Pigs.”

Answers will vary, but might include Flannery’s not knowing that guinea pigs weren’t pigs, Mrs. Morehouse’s jumping, the Morehouse boy’s acting guilty, Flannery’s being inwardly satisfied for “knowing he did his duty well,” the multiplying of the pigs, the stupidity and inefficiency of the railroad office, the crazed way Flannery packs up the pigs, and the day that the main office gets the shipment of thousands of guinea pigs!

2. What could both Morehouse and Flannery have done better to stop the guinea pig fiasco from happening?

Answers will vary!

3. What non-humorous point might the author be making in the story?

Answers will vary, but possibly the inefficiency of some businesses (or government agencies), because of the nature of the agencies and/or stubbornness of those working in them.

4. Tell about a time you were frustrated and couldn't make someone understand a basic fact.

Answers will vary!

Week 6, Day 1: The Log of a Cowboy (Chapters 1 & 2)

1. What relationship with cattle does Thomas have at the story's opening? What effect does this have on him?

He milks his family's cows, herds them when it's time, and closely watches them to make sure foragers don't steal them. This experience, and the enjoyment of doing it, lead to his wanting to become a cowboy.

2. How does Thomas's family's move, and his work experience, prepare him for the cattle drive?

He learns to move cattle, persist through hardships, and travel long distances, all of which will serve him well as a cowboy moving a herd of cattle a thousand miles. He also learns how to ride long distances, speak Spanish, and play the fiddle!

3. Give some details of the cattle drive (how far, how many, where, etc.). What details of riding cattle did you not know or surprised you?

It is a thousand-mile trip, three thousand head of cattle, from Texas to Montana. It starts in May and is to end in September; traveling 15 miles a day will ensure the herd gets there on time. Other unknown or surprising details will vary!

Week 6, Day 2: The Log of a Cowboy (Chapters 7 & 10)

1. What happens with the "trail cutters," Flood, and the Texas Rangers?

The "trail cutters" are cattle rustlers. Flood treats them nicely, pretends not to know who they are, and refuses to allow them to take cattle they claim is theirs. The Texas Rangers meet the cattle drivers, and the next day when the rustlers return with a large group of armed men, the Texas Rangers spring on them and arrest them.

2. What is difficult about dealing with the Plains Indian chief and running the herd through potential Indian territory?

Flood doesn't know how much of what the chief tells him is the truth, but decides to give him several cows anyway; Flood also tries to determine through two Apaches, using bribery, what is the safest route to take (to avoid other tribes). Part of the difficulty lies in figuring out if nearby tribes have enough warriors to be a threat to the cattle drivers.

3. What is both encouraging and worrisome about running into the herd of buffalo?

The men are happy about getting fresh meat, but concerned that the buffalo could stampede, causing the cattle to also stampede.

4. What is your thought on how the cowboys handle the Salt Fork River?

Answers will vary, but it's impressive, given as dangerous as its crossing is, that they just accept the challenge: "Get across we must."

Week 6, Day 3: The Log of a Cowboy (Chapters 20, 23, 24)

1. Why does "The Rebel" conduct a gunfight with the stranger in the bar? What is inherently irrational about such fights?

The stranger "insults" him by offering a toast to General Grant; even though Flood had just been joking with him about the same thing. The irrationality of the gunfight is that it is wildly out of proportion with the supposed insult, and it doesn't really prove either man is correct or the winner—just faster and more accurate with a gun!

2. Are the delivery of the cattle and trip back to Texas a letdown, or anti-climactic, after the various exciting action scenes in the story? Why or why not?

Answers will vary.

3. What are some of the pros and cons of living and working in the style of the cowboys who make the cattle drive?

Answers will vary, but might include things like companionship, living in the wide open, accomplishing a difficult and demanding task; but also loneliness, a tough life on the trail, etc.

Week 6, Day 4: Family Life in America

1. Name several humorous parts of this essay.

The exaggeratedly depressed state of the Twilly family, the crazy hatred and mean things they do, all written very matter-of-factly, of course!

2. What do you think Benchley's main point is in this essay? How does the last line reinforce this point?

To show how demoralizing and depressing much American literature was becoming—needlessly ugly, claiming to be realistic. The last line, "We must get the roof fixed...it lets the sun in," represents how modern authors (in 1922) often avoided writing about anything with "light" in it—hopeful, cheerful, and edifying.

3. What do you think should be the balance between writing literature that can be realistic, but uplifting or instructive?

Answers will vary, but students might remark that, like the Bible shows us some sinful and ugly things, writers can include those in their works, but in a way that demonstrates their evil AND contrasts it to the Good, without wallowing in ugliness.

The Child Knows the Answer—Do You?

How are Benchley's observations in this essay true today?

Answers will vary, but some smart-alecky, know-it-all kids still act the same way!

Week 7, Day 1: Resolution of the Philadelphia...Society of Friends

1. Sum up the meaning of the first paragraph of “Resolution.”

The Society of Friends are grieved by the conflict between the colonies and Britain. Since they believe that the resolutions that keep being passed by the Americans in response to the British are doing nothing more than making the hostilities worse, they have recommended that none of the Quakers sign such resolutions.

2. What does the second paragraph say about (a) a Christian’s duty to his government, and (b) the view of the Society of Friends regarding the “political writings and addresses” being published by revolutionaries?

That Christians should submit themselves to earthly governments, and that the political writings (a) are “destructive of the peace and harmony of civil society,” (b) “contrary to the nature and precepts of the gospel,” and (c) keep the two sides from finding true, peaceful solutions to their differences.

3. List the reasons why the Quakers oppose the “contrary modes of proceeding” that many revolutionaries have followed.

They have confused the colonies, will likely result in violence and bloodshed, threaten constitutional government, and threaten “liberty of conscience.”

4. What declaration is made in the final paragraph of the resolution?

The Quakers, because of their duty to God, oppose any law-breaking by the colonists or incitements to revolt against what they believe is the legitimate authority God has placed into power. They also earnestly desire the resolution of conflicts between the two sides in a peaceful manner.

Week 7, Day 2: Declaration of the Mennonites and Brethren to the PA Assembly

1. In “Declaration,” why does Benjamin Hershey thank the Assembly? What does he ask upon the assembly?

Pennsylvania was founded upon “liberty of conscience,” and Hershey thanks the assembly for working to protect this right and for advising peace to the state’s inhabitants. Hershey asks for the assembly the same blessing of wisdom and righteousness that God granted William Penn.

2. What does Hershey state that the Mennonites and Brethren *will* do and *will not* do for “men’s lives”? What do they pledge to do unto “Caesar”?

They will help preserve men’s lives, but will not participate in killing or injuring men. They pledge to pay tribute (taxes) unto the government.

3. Tell what Hershey twice “begs” for in this address. Why does he do so?

He begs for patience; he understands that there are some Christians who believe that is permissible to take up arms against others.

4. What tone do you notice in the Mennonite declaration? Give evidence of this.

The tone is one of great humility, with its requests for patience, speaking of others as greater, submitting to the rulers of Britain, and repeated statements that they are not trying to offend anyone.

Week 7, Day 3: The American Crisis, Volume 1

1. List Paine's main points on the first several pages.

It's time to act now; God's on our side; King George can't pray for God's help, since he's on the wrong side.

2. Why does Paine give a short account of some of the army maneuvers he was involved in?

It seems as if he is trying to gain credibility with supporters as not just someone who urges others to fight, but as someone who has been involved himself.

3. Give examples of some of the inflammatory language Paine uses to describe Tories and what he wants to do to them. Sum up his assessment of the man with the child who says he wants peace. Do you think his assessments of the "Tories" and this man are fair? Why or why not?

Paine says Tories are scoundrels and cowards and only want British rule for their own personal gain. ("Every Tory is a coward; for servile, slavish, self-interested fear is the foundation of Toryism.") He wants to expel them from America and take their property and use it to pay for the costs of the revolution. Paine also says that the father who wanted peace should have said he wanted war if it would give his child peace when the child was older.

4. What words and phrases does Thomas Paine use to appeal to Christians? What is ironic about his quoting Voltaire right before saying God blessed Washington with "uninterrupted health"?

- *comparing conquering tyranny to conquering hell*
- *"heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods"*
- *saying "unlimited power" like the ability to "bind us in all cases whatsoever" should only belong to God*
- *"God Almighty will not give up a people to military destruction" who have tried to avoid war*
- *"God hath blessed him [Washington] with uninterrupted health"*
- *"Let us reason the matter together" (reference to Isaiah 1:18)*
- *"God governs the world"*
- *"Should he [Howe] now be expelled, I wish with all the devotion of a Christian, that the names of Whig and Tory may never more be mentioned...."*
- *"show your faith by your works, that God may bless you"*

Quoting Voltaire before thanking God for blessing Washington with good health is ironic, since Voltaire was a famous atheist.

5. How does Paine use an example of a "house-breaker" to justify revolution? What does he claim will happen if Britain is not defeated?

Paine claims that this war is similar to repelling a house-breaker, to argue that the war is defensive, and therefore morally sound. He says that if the British win they will be vengeful and ravage the colonists. Paine says we have two choices: (1) to press on fighting the revolution, or (2) to face "habitations without safety" and "slavery without hope."

6. What provocative phrases and words does Paine use in *American Crisis*? What particular word that describes what he is advocating does he not use?

- *ravaging*

- *traitors*
- *summer soldier and sunshine patriot*
- *freedom*
- *murderer*
- *highwayman*
- *infested with Tories*
- *dominion*

Paine never uses the word “revolution,” however.

7. Is Paine correct? Does God always keep Christians from suffering under tyrants? Why or why not?

Answers will vary, but it should be, essentially, “No.” God does not promise perfect, just, or non-burdensome governments to the nations of the world, even when there are many Christians. Christians are to submit to earthly governments unless they are ordered to commit acts that violate their Christian faith (paying more taxes does not qualify!).

Petition Concerning the Wives and Children of Loyalists

1. In the beginning of the petition, what do Anne Hooper et al. express as one reason why they have written the petition to Governor Alexander Martin? What act of the governor and council distresses them greatly? What do they ask the governor and council to do?

So those on the side of the revolutionaries won’t come across as cruel, as some of the behaviors of the British army have been. They are upset that the governor and council have ordered the wives and children of loyalists who fled North Carolina to leave the state and most of their property within 48 hours. Anne Hooper and the petition’s other signers ask the governor and council to rescind this order.

2. In what way do the petitioners defend the wives of the loyalists and chide the actions of the government?

They say that they were not responsible for the British order against the petitioners, and that they (the wives of the loyalists) even worked to ease the sufferings of the petitioners. The petitioners also say that when they were ordered out, their friends received and welcomed them, but that if the North Carolina government does the same to the wives and children of the loyalists, they won’t have friends to welcome and receive them in the same way. Also, they chide the North Carolina government for fearing “the feeble efforts of women and children,” and by saying, “It is beneath the character of the independent State of North Carolina to war with women and children.”

3. Look at a list of the terms of the Treaty of Paris (1783) between Britain and the United States. Which of the terms of the Treaty of Paris are connected to events like the occurrences addressed in this petition?

The terms of the Treaty of Paris included America’s promise to return all property seized from Loyalists, and not to confiscate any more property of Loyalists.

Week 8: Bartleby the Scrivener

1. Describe how Melville creates great interest with his opening paragraph. How are the opening and closing paragraphs similar?

He talks about a mysterious copyist named Bartleby, about whom little is known. The narrator expresses his wish to have known more about this fascinating copyist who worked for him. The opening and closing

paragraphs both describe the mystery of Bartleby in a way that leaves the reader wanting to know more about this strange character.

2. Who is the narrator? What kind of a man is he?

He is a lawyer, about 60 years old, who deals in deeds and mortgages. He is a “safe,” “prudent,” and calm man, not given to excitement, and not very ambitious.

3. Describe the narrator’s office building.

It sits surrounded by taller buildings and afford only a view of walls that tower around and over it.

4. What are Turkey, Nippers, and Ginger Nut like? How does the lawyer/narrator deal with them? What are their real names?

Turkey, Nippers, and Ginger Nut are employees of the narrator. Turkey and Nippers are office copyists; Ginger Nut is an errand boy.

Turkey is about 60, fat, frequently out of breath, and energetic and efficient, at least before noon. After lunch, he is hopelessly useless and angrily storms around the office, not getting much production work done. The narrator tries to talk him out of working in the afternoons, but Turkey insists he is productive, and the narrator agrees to allow him to stay in the afternoons, although giving him his less important papers so he won’t spoil them through errors caused by his bad temper.

Nippers is about 25, pale and sickly looking, and tormented by “ambition and [bad] digestion.” He grinds his teeth over his mistakes, and is the opposite of Turkey in the timing of his temperament—whereas Turkey is pleasant before noon and angry after lunch, Nippers is irritable in the mornings, and agreeable in the afternoons (partly because he has a few beers sometimes during lunch)! He is irritated at the height of the table he works upon, constantly adjusting it with no success, sometimes even picking it up and slamming it down on the floor. He’s a quick copyist, but a bad dresser.

Ginger-Nut is a twelve-year-old errand boy. He loves nuts and keeps nutshells in his desk. He also frequently is employed by Turkey and Nippers to buy cakes and apples.

The real names of these three characters are never given.

5. Describe Bartleby’s looks and behavior. Where does the narrator place him in the office? What is Bartleby’s view from his desk?

Bartleby looks pale and ghostlike. He is calm and quiet, which pleases the narrator (who hopes it will set an example for Turkey and Nippers). Although he copies a great deal, he writes mechanically and cheerlessly.

He is placed in a desk close to the narrator, but his only outside view is a high brick wall, three feet away from the window. The narrator also places a folding screen between Bartleby and himself, so they cannot see each other.

6. What does Bartleby do that stuns the narrator? How does he (the narrator), Turkey, and Nippers react to Bartleby? Why doesn’t the narrator fire Bartleby?

When the narrator one day requests him to proofread a document, Bartleby replies, “I would prefer not to.” The narrator is stunned that any employee would talk to his employer this way. He asks Turkey, Nippers, and Ginger Nut what they think, and they support the narrator. He doesn’t fire Bartleby only because Bartleby

shows no anger or disrespect whatsoever with his reply. The narrator believes Bartleby doesn't mean to be insolent, but that he cannot help it somehow. He keeps Bartleby because he believes Bartleby will not be tolerated by any other employer for being eccentric, and if not for his patience and tolerance toward Bartleby, that he would starve.

7. List some of the strange characteristics of Bartleby that the narrator observes.

- *He never sees Bartleby leave the office.*
- *He seems to live only on ginger nuts.*
- *He never speaks except when spoken to.*
- *He stands looking out of the window at the brick wall for long periods of time.*
- *He never goes out anywhere.*
- *He refuses to give anyone any information about himself.*

8. What happens to the narrator's relationship with Bartleby over time?

He accepts Bartleby as a mystery, allowing for his persistent refusals to assist him.

9. What does the narrator's visit to his office on a Sunday reveal? What does this do for the narrator's sentiment for Bartleby?

Bartleby is sleeping in the law office, and apparently never leaves. The narrator is overwhelmed at the sadness of it and feels tenderly toward Bartleby. He begins to think of the sadness of Bartleby's existence—lonely and miserable, among so many bright colors and happy people with friends in the city. He doesn't feel that he can ever be of any real help to Bartleby, because, as he says, Bartleby's "soul...suffered, and his soul I could not reach."

10. What "word" do the men in the office pick up from Bartleby?

"Prefer."

11. What does Bartleby finally decide about his work at the office? What does the narrator tell Bartleby, and how does Bartleby react?

Bartleby refuses to do any more copying. The narrator tries to comply for a period of time, but eventually asks him to leave. Bartleby refuses to go. The situation regresses to a point where Bartleby does nothing at the office but stare out the window at the wall all day.

12. How does reading "Edwards on the Will" and "Priestly on Necessity" give temporary comfort to the narrator? What does he decide to do in that respect? What changes his mind?

He convinces himself that there is nothing he could ever do to encourage Bartleby to change, since Bartleby is predestined by "Providence" to act the way he does. The narrator decides that he will allow "Providence" to use him to provide Bartleby with a place to stay and work as long as is necessary. When the narrator's colleagues remark disparagingly about Bartleby's presence—and when Bartleby refuses to comply with their minor requests for help—the narrator decides to be free of Bartleby by moving his offices and leaving him behind.

13. After Bartleby is sent to the Tombs, what does the narrator find him doing when he visits him? How is this scene familiar?

He finds Staring at a high wall inside the prison, which is the same thing Bartleby did at the office.

14. Explain the story's end and the tantalizing details (and lack of details) on Bartleby's past.

Bartleby starves himself to death in the Tombs. Very little is known about him except for his previous employment at the Dead Letter Office in Washington, D.C.

15. Give examples of how "wall" or "walls" appear several times in "Bartleby." What do you think they might represent?

"Bartleby" is subtitled "A Story of Wall Street." There are walls in the office, walls outside the office window, and walls at the Tombs where Bartleby stays. They probably represent Bartleby's—and possibly mankind's—loneliness and isolation from others. More specifically, the office walls might represent man's isolation from other people, and the high walls outside might represent man's isolation from God.

For Additional Study: Bartleby the Scrivener

List some examples of humor in "Bartleby."

- *Turkey makes scraping noises with his pen that blend with the scraping noises he makes while eating ginger nut cakes.*
- *Turkey absent mindedly licks a flat ginger nut cake and tries to apply it to an envelope for a seal.*
- *Nippers and Turkey take turns being irritable and loud (one in the morning, one in the afternoon).*
- *The narrator wonders if ginger nut cakes are too spicy for Bartleby, but remarks that probably Bartleby prefers that they should not be.*
- *Turkey and Nippers both offer to punch Bartleby for "preferring not to" help with copying.*
- *The men in the office all begin to use the word "prefer" unintentionally.*
- *The narrator offers Bartleby a job traveling with a gentleman to Europe, so Bartleby can "entertain" him with his conversation, even though Bartleby barely speaks to anyone.*
- *The grub-man at the Tombs introduces himself to Bartleby by saying, "Hope you find it pleasant here, sir;—spacious grounds—cool apartments, sir—hope you'll stay with us some time" (as if Bartleby really wants to be in a prison for a long time).*
- *The grub-man asks the narrator if he knows a man named Monroe, a prisoner from Sing-Sing, and the narrator replies matter-of-factly, "No, I was never socially acquainted with any forgers."*

It might seem strange that the narrator seems to pity and identify more with John C. Colt more than he does Samuel Adams, Colt's victim. Why do you think the narrator feels this way?

Answers will vary, but it might be because the narrator feels for the frustration of Colt and his rash decision to strike out at and kill Adams for upsetting him so greatly.

What is the irony in the narrator's hiring Bartleby partly because of his (Bartleby's) calm demeanor?

Bartleby is hired partly to calm down the office—with Turkey and Nippers being disruptive and bad-tempered at different times of the day—but he does the opposite, throwing the office into turmoil.

When the narrator goes by his office on the way to church one Sunday morning, he discovers that Bartleby has been living there. The narrator then states, "Somehow, the things I had seen disqualified me for the time from church-going."

What might this statement by the narrator—and the general mood in “Bartleby”—demonstrate about Melville’s view of God? How would a Christian respond? (See for example Psalm 40:5, Psalm 103:8, John 3:14-17, Romans 8:35-39, James 5:10-11, 1 Peter 5:6-7, and 2 Peter 3:9.)

Answers will vary, but one possibility is that this is author Herman Melville’s suggestion that the evil and loneliness in the world demonstrates that he did not think that there was a God (or such problems would not exist), or that he did not like the way that God allowed pain in the world. The Bible says in the above verses, however, that...

- *God’s thoughts toward those who trust in Him can’t be numbered (Psalm 40:5).*
- *God is merciful, gracious, and slow to anger (Psalm 103:8).*
- *God loved the world so much He sent Jesus to die for the world’s sins (John 3:14-17).*
- *Nothing can separate the Christian from the love of Christ (Romans 8:35-39).*
- *God is filled with pity and tenderness toward mankind (James 5:10-11).*
- *God cares for those who trust in Him, and He wants us to cast our cares upon Him (1 Peter 5:6-7).*
- *God is patient, not willing that any should perish, but that all would come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).*

What things happen to Bartleby that remind you of what happened to Jesus Christ?

- *The narrator questions Bartleby, who often doesn’t answer (like Pilate questioning Jesus at his crucifixion).*
- *After the narrator moves to a new office and Bartleby hangs around the old one, the narrator denies three times to his colleagues that he doesn’t know or isn’t responsible for Bartleby (like Peter’s denial of Jesus.) At the Tombs, Bartleby is surrounded by thieves and murderers (as Jesus was on the cross).*

Week 9, Day 1: Letter to President Thomas Jefferson from the Danbury (Connecticut) Baptist Association, and Jefferson’s Reply

1. What point about religious liberty does the Danbury Baptist Association make?

That it should be promoted by law in free nations. That no one should suffer for his beliefs at the hand of government.

2. What does the Association say is the proper function of government? How do they say their religious rights are being violated?

The proper function of law is to punish evildoing from one man to another. The Danbury Baptists say that the Connecticut government claims that their (the Baptists’) freedom of religion comes only by the Connecticut government’s permission, not as an “inalienable” right as stated in the Declaration of Independence.

3. What do the Danbury Baptists hope for from President Jefferson? What do they explicitly *not* expect to happen?

They hope President Jefferson can have an influence through his Presidency, with the goal of convincing states everywhere to remove their state churches and persecution of those of different beliefs. The Danbury Baptists do not, however, look to President Jefferson as a dictator who will order Connecticut to stop persecuting the Danbury Baptists, or to the U. S. government to begin dictating practices to state governments like Connecticut’s.

4. What specific prayer do the Danbury Baptists pray for President Jefferson in the closing paragraph?

That “the Lord preserve you safe from every evil and bring you at last to His heavenly kingdom through Jesus Christ our Glorious Mediator.”

5. In his reply, what major points does President Thomas Jefferson make in the second paragraph? What does he mean by saying, “I shall see with sincere satisfaction the progress of those sentiments which tend to restore to man all his natural rights”? What help does he offer as President and enforcer of the Constitution for the situation in Connecticut?

Religion is between God and man, no one has any business telling anyone else how to worship, the government has no business punishing people for their beliefs, and that there should be a “wall of separation” between church and state. The statement about “progress of those sentiments” means Jefferson looks forward to the day when citizens are not persecuted for their beliefs. He offers no help from the United States government to the Danbury Baptists, undoubtedly believing that he has no authority to do so.

6. What does Jefferson mean by the “wall of separation between Church and State”? How does the Bible separate the functions of church and state? (Compare, for example: Romans 12:9-10 vs. Romans 13:3; Romans 12:19 vs. Romans 13:4; Romans 12:21 vs. Romans 13:4; Ephesians 6:17 vs. Romans 13:4.)

He means that the United States government should not—and has no constitutional authority—to interfere in the affairs of the church. If any government had any business interfering in religion, it would have to be state government (and clearly Jefferson did not believe that state governments should propagate a certain religion, based on his reply). Jefferson believed that no government should force citizens into certain beliefs, or punish them for not having other beliefs. The Bible separates the church’s functions from the state’s in these ways:

- *The church loves (Romans 12:9-10); the state terrorizes evil (Romans 13:3).*
- *The church forgives (Romans 12:19); the state is a revenger (Romans 13:4).*
- *The church overcomes evil with good (Romans 12:21); the state executes wrath upon evildoers (Romans 13:4).*
- *The church uses the sword of the spirit (Ephesians 6:17); the state uses a sword of steel (Romans 13:4).*

7. How does the wording of Jefferson’s closing paragraph compare to the Danbury Baptist Association’s closing paragraph? What do you think this might indicate?

Instead of referencing Jesus Christ, Jefferson refers to God as “the common father and creator of man”—the view of a Deist, which Jefferson was.

Week 9, Day 2: The Luck of Roaring Camp

1. What is the dual meaning of the title of this short story?

It means both “the fortune of Roaring Camp” (which improved after the baby arrived), and the name that the camp gives the baby.

2. List some of the colorful names of characters in this story. What do these names do for the reader?

French Peter, Kanaka Joe, Cherokee Sal, Stumpy, Kentuck. They make the story sound like it is full of exciting, interesting people.

3. What makes Cherokee Sal’s suffering in childbirth especially difficult?

She is the only woman in the camp, surrounded by men who can't sympathize with her and can't help her deliver her baby (although Sandy Tipton, at least for a moment, thinks about her condition instead of the cards he has in his hand).

4. About how many residents are there in Roaring Camp? What are they like?

There are about 100 residents. They are rough characters, fugitives, criminals, gamblers, and so on.

5. What is the camp's geography? Why is it important that Harte describes this at the story's beginning?

Roaring Camp sits in a valley where two hills meet a river. The only way out is a steep trail. This is important, because it explains the flood later in the story.

6. How does the town react to the baby's birth?

They are unsure of what to do. Stumpy organizes a donation line, and the men line up and donate odd items that a baby would not need, although generously. Kentuck is charmed when the infant grabs hold of his finger while he is passing through the line to look at the baby. They decide to raise the infant themselves, not trusting other camps (even ones with females) to look after it as honestly as they would.

7. How does the baby's naming ceremony turn out?

It begins as a parody of a christening ceremony, but Stumpy steps in and names the baby, in a serious manner, "Thomas Luck."

8. How does Thomas Luck begin to affect the camp?

The men clean up their behavior, they wash the cabins and themselves, they are quieter (so as not to disturb Thomas), they stop cursing, and they see the beauty in objects like flowers. The camp seems to prosper.

9. How does the winter of 1851 affect Roaring Camp?

The deep snow melts, causing a flood, which destroys the camp. Stumpy's cabin is destroyed and he is killed, but Thomas Luck disappears. Kentuck is found holding Thomas Luck, who has died, but Kentuck says that the baby is taking him with him.

10. Give some examples of humor in this story.

Here are some examples:

- *The men contribute items to the baby, including a Bible ("contributor not detected"), and a silver teaspoon, on which the initials were not the giver's (indicating that it was stolen or possibly won by gambling).*
- *Kentuck keeps sticking up his finger to people and saying, "He rasted with it," and keeps calling the baby "the little cuss."*
- *The men sometimes call Thomas Luck "The Coyote" because he howls loudly.*
- *Thomas Luck falls into soft dirt and gets stuck with his legs sticking in the air for several minutes.*

11. What about the ending of "The Luck of Roaring Camp" appeals to readers?

It is sentimental to think that just a small, innocent baby could make such a positive change upon a camp full of drunks, gamblers, cussers, and rough men.

12. What comparisons can be made between “The Luck of Roaring Camp” to the Biblical accounts of Noah and Jonah?

It can be compared to the Noahic flood, in which God cleanses the world of evil, and Jonah, who was one man sent by God to save Nineveh from destruction.

Week 9, Day 3: An Angel in Disguise

1. How does the first paragraph of “An Angel in Disguise,” as short as it is, do such an effective job of opening the story?

It uses clear, strong verbs and nouns.

2. Why are John and Katy taken and Maggie not?

John and Katy are bright and able to be useful; Maggie is bedridden and would be a burden to a family that took her.

3. How do the villagers justify their idea of leaving Maggie to the poorhouse?

They say that any place with warmth, food, and clean clothes would be better than what Maggie is used to having.

4. Describe Mrs. Thompson and her reaction to Joe’s bringing Maggie home.

Mrs. Thompson is sharp and quick-tempered, bitter at her life. She objects strongly (and loudly) to Joe’s bringing Maggie to their home.

5. What does Joe see in the window of his house later that day? Why does he walk loudly into the house?

Joe sees Mrs. Thompson interacting with Maggie; he walks loudly into the house so his wife will know he is coming and have time to move away from the child, so she won’t reveal the fact that she is taken with her.

6. Why do you think Mrs. Thompson seems so reluctant to allow Maggie to stay at first? What changes her mind? List some of the hints that the author includes to anticipate her change of heart.

There are hints that Mrs. Thompson has been unable to have children, which could be why she is bitter and reluctant to have Maggie stay. Hints about Mrs. Thompson’s change of heart include her lack of gruffness when Joe asks when the meal will be ready, her strange look when Joe says he will take Maggie to the poorhouse (testing her), her asking Maggie if she likes her food, and her stating that they will keep the child a few more days.

Week 9, Day 3: Thanatopsis

1. What is the name for the poetic form that “Thanatopsis” is written in? (Remember Phyllis Wheatley’s “On Virtue”?)

Blank verse.

2. What is unusual about the word “nature” in this poem? What do you think that indicates about Bryant’s worldview?

It is capitalized each time. It could indicate Bryant's non-Christian worldview of nature as God, the view of pantheists and transcendentalists.

3. Explain what Bryant means by "the last bitter hour" (line 9) and the "narrow house" (12). What does he recommend the reader do at this hour?

"The last bitter hour" is the hour of death, and the "narrow house" is the coffin. Bryant recommends that the reader "listen to nature's teachings."

4. Sum up Bryant's view on what happens when a person dies, according to this poem. What two main ideas does he say should comfort those near death?

When a person dies, he just becomes part of nature, to "mix forever with the elements" (26), and have his skeleton pierced underground by some tree whose roots grow through him (30). The two main things that are supposed to comfort the dead are (1) the fact that all others in history have died or will die, including the great men of history, and (2) the fact that the "tomb" of earth is beautiful, with rivers and valleys, greenery, and so on. Hurrah.

5. What is the message of the last stanza of "Thanatopsis"?

To live with zeal and gusto, so that when you die, you can "sleep well."

6. How does a Christian's view of death contrast with the one presented in "Thanatopsis"? See for example Mark 12:18-27, Luke 23:39-43, John 11:17-27, 1 Corinthians 15:35-58, 2 Corinthians 5:1-10, and Titus 2:11-13.

"Thanatopsis" presents a view that man just dies and becomes part of nature, without feeling or sense, just decaying and intertwining with the elements. God's Word, on the other hand, says that

- *there is a resurrection of the dead (Mark 12:18-27),*
- *that those who trust in Jesus will join Him "in paradise" (Luke 23:39-43),*
- *that those who believe in Jesus Christ will be resurrected and "never die" (John 11:17-27),*
- *that God will raise those who believe in Him with an "incorruptible" body, since Jesus has triumphed over death and the grave (1 Corinthians 15:35-58),*
- *that to be "absent from the body" is to be "present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:1-10), and*
- *Christians look for a "blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-13).*

Week 10, Day 1: Old Ironsides

1. List the strong verbs and nouns that Oliver Wendell Holmes uses in "Old Ironsides."

Verbs: danced, rung, burst, sweep, knelt, hurrying, pluck, sink, shook, and so on.

Nouns: ensign, eye, banner, shout, roar, meteor, clouds, deck, blood, foe, flood, waves, knee, harpies, eagle, hulk, wave, grave, flag, sail, lightning, gale, and so on.

2. What does Holmes suggest be done to "Old Ironsides"? Why? What effect does this have upon the reader?

He suggests they tear down her flag, nail it to the mast, and sink the ship, rather than dismantle it piece by piece, because it would be more fitting for the ship to "die" in a watery "grave" to honor its gloried past. This makes the reader think, "No! They should keep this historic ship around!"

3. To what two items does Holmes compare “Old Ironsides”?

A meteor and an eagle.

4. How does Holmes make the ship seem almost lifelike, or even human?

He uses active words that make the ship seem alive, with energy and activity and motion. Again, it makes the reader almost feel sorry for this ship that is going to be torn apart by “harpies” who don’t honor its record in battle.

Concord Hymn

5. What has happened to the bridge that originally stood at the battle site?

It has been swept away by “Time” to the sea.

6. What does Emerson say the purpose of the “votive stone” is?

To help keep the memory of those who fought at the Battle of Concord.

7. To whom does Emerson “pray” in the last stanza? What does he ask for?

He “prays” to Time, asking it to spare the weathering effects on the monument they built at the site, so the stone won’t wear away as easily as many things do under the ravages of time.

8. What is the most famous line of “Concord Hymn”?

“Fired the shot heard round the world.”

Week 10, Day 2: Paul Revere’s Ride

1. What is the rhyme scheme of “Paul Revere’s Ride”?

It varies, but each stanza has its own interlocking rhyme scheme.

2. How does the ending of the poem reflect the beginning?

The beginning tells what Paul Revere will do; the ending shows him doing it. Both mention the town of Middlesex and its villages and farms.

3. What call for a more modern issue (for 1860) could Longfellow be making in the last stanza? What words support this idea?

For modern (in 1860) Americans to either unite, or to end slavery. The words “Through all our history, to the last, In the hour of darkness and peril and need, The people will waken and listen to hear The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed, And the midnight message of Paul Revere” can be read to mean that throughout America’s history, people have risen up to answer the call when they were needed in a crisis.

The New Colossus

1. Define the term *sonnet* and *iambic pentameter*. How does “The New Colossus” fit both definitions?

A sonnet is a fourteen-line poem written in iambic pentameter (ten syllables per line, five beats per line). “The New Colossus,” therefore, fits this description of a sonnet!

2. How is the Colossus of Rhodes different from the Statue of Liberty? Explain the line “Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!”

It is a statue that welcomes, instead of conquers. The line tells older, more established nations with celebrated histories that America is different and welcomes people of all types to help build her traditions.

3. Explain how the way that Lazarus describes the people trying to get into America contrasts with the “door” to America.

They are described as poor, wretched, refuse, and homeless, which contrasts with the “golden” door to America.

Week 10, Day 3: Self-Reliance

1. Sum up the following statements Emerson writes in “Self-Reliance,” and compare them to God’s Word.

- “A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the luster of the firmament of bards and sages.”

Emerson: A person should be in tune with his own ideas, rather than with those ideas from persons who are considered wise by most.

- “Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string.”

Emerson: Follow whatever your heart says when you make a decision.

God’s Word: “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies....” (Matthew 15:18-19).

- “Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members....The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs....Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist.”

Emerson: Society encourages conformity; it persecutes those who are individuals. If you are strong enough to stand up to the pressures of others to conform, you are a man.

God’s Word: “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2).

- “Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind....No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature....[T]he only right is what is after my constitution, the only wrong what is against it.”

Emerson: No religious text or teaching or doctrine is sacred; only my own mind. The only right is what I believe feels right; the only wrong is what I feel is not right.

God’s Word: “Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good” (Romans 7:12).

“And that from a child thou [Timothy] hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15).

“For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens...” (Hebrews 7:26).

“And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, LORD God Almighty....” (Revelation 4:8).

“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 16:25).

- “If you maintain a dead church, contribute to a dead Bible-society, vote with a great party either for the government or against it, spread your table like base housekeepers—under all these screens I have difficulty to detect the precise man you are....But do your work, and I shall know you.”

Emerson: Your identity as a Christian or church-goer, a Democrat or Republican, hides what kind of person you are. I’ll know you by the kind of works you do.

God’s Word: “For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit....A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil....” (Luke 6:43, 45).

- “A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines....To be great is to be misunderstood.”

Emerson: Consistency is not a real virtue or character strength. Sometimes you will be wrong because you feel a certain way that contradicts what you said or did before. Whatever you feel right at the time is right. Great men and women are always misunderstood because they do “great” things instead of worrying about being consistent.

- “If, therefore, a man claims to know and speak of God, and carries you backward to the phraseology of some old mouldered nation in another country, in another world, believe him not.... [S]ee what strong intellects dare not yet hear God himself, unless he speak the phraseology of I know not what David, or Jeremiah, or Paul. We shall not always set so great a price on a few texts, on a few lives.”

Emerson: Whatever a man does, there is a “god” (the Over-Soul) at work behind him. Since men are all part of this “god,” then what they do is right, since the divine power is working through them. There is a Supreme Cause that makes everything in the universe holy because it “enters into all lower forms. Don’t believe anyone who refers to the God of the Bible; I don’t care what prophets like David, Jeremiah, or Paul said.

God’s Word: “Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God” (Isaiah 44:6).

“Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works. All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name. For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone” (Psalm 86:8-10).

“Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him” (Proverbs 30:5).

[Jesus:] “Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they [the Pharisees] to him...we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me....Ye are of your father the devil” (John 8:41-42, 44).

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place....For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1:19, 21).

- “O father, O mother, O wife, O brother, O friend, I have lived with you after appearances hitherto. Henceforward I am the truth’s. Be it known unto you that henceforward I obey no law less than the eternal law....I must be myself.”

Emerson: Friends, relatives, wife: In the past I’ve been generous and not done what I wanted because I thought you wouldn’t like it, or you might be hurt or offended. No more! From now on I’m going to do whatever I feel like! I gotta be me!

God’s Word: “Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts” (Proverbs 21:2).

“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:3-8).

- “As men’s prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect.”

Emerson: There is no need to pray to a God; instead, since all men are part of God, they need to exercise their wills, instead of asking permission from God. For someone to believe in creeds (like the Bible) is a sign that he is crazy or fooled by silly fairy tales.

God’s Word: “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty” (2 Peter 1:16).

[Jesus:] “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42).

- “Nothing can bring you peace but yourself.”

Emerson: Nothing can bring you peace but peace yourself.

God’s Word: “Peace I [Jesus] leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

“These things I [Jesus] have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...” (Romans 5:1).

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7).

“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven” (Colossians 1:20).

2. If you had to sum up Emerson’s message in “Self-Reliance” in a one sentence, what would it be?

Answers will vary, but basically, do your own thing, follow your own ideas, ignore anything that contradicts your idea of what is good or right, and don’t conform to anyone else’s expectations.

3. What ideas presented by Emerson in “Self-Reliance” can Christians agree with?

Answers will vary, but not conforming to the world, being an individual although others mock you, working where God has placed you, being content with what you have, and so on.

Week 11, Day 1: The Arrow and the Song

1. How are the first two stanzas similar? How are they different?

Both are things the speaker “releases” into the air, and both are unable to be found by the speaker; one is a weapon, and one is pleasant.

2. Since hunters and archers don’t normally shoot arrows into the air, what do you think the arrow in the poem represents? What do you think about its sticking in the oak?

The arrow might represent some hurtful words the speaker used rashly. Hitting the oak and staying there might represent the words’ “sticking” in someone’s mind, unable to be forgotten.

3. How is the song in the third stanza similar to the arrow? What do you think the song might represent? How does the friend play into the poem?

The song in the third stanza is “unbroken,” like the arrow stuck in the oak tree. It might represent healing words, or an apology, to the friend the speaker has offended. The friend might have accepted the speaker’s apology or attempt at restoring the friendship wounded through the “arrow.”

The Raven

1. Briefly sum up in a paragraph or two the chain of events that make up “The Raven.” How does Poe’s poem—which tells the same story as your paragraph—just *sound* better? (We’ll assume your rewrite of “The Raven” isn’t better than Poe’s original.)

The tired, weak speaker is reading books from his library at midnight and hears a rapping at his door. The speaker had been trying in vain to read books to forget about his lost love Lenore. The speaker is terrified at the rapping at his door, but repeats to himself, “It’s just a visitor.” The speaker apologizes to the person rapping at the door for making him wait, and opens the door to let him in, but no one is there. The speaker stares long into the darkness, dreaming (possibly) that it is Lenore, whispers her name, and hears the echo of her name repeated. His heart burns within, he hears tapping again, but says it is just the wind. A raven flies

in the open door, acting like he owns the place, and perches on a bust of Pallas above the speaker's chamber door. The raven's serious face turns the speaker's sadness into a smile, the speaker asks the raven what its name is in the underworld, and the raven says, "Nevermore." The speaker is amazed to hear the raven answer, and though the word "Nevermore" as a name means nothing, the speaker says no person has ever heard of an animal or bird with such a name. The raven sits motionless, and the speaker says that the bird will leave him like his other friends have, and the raven again says, "Nevermore." The speaker reasons that the raven says "Nevermore" because it heard its old master say the word over and over because of disaster that befell him. The speaker sets up a seat in front of the raven, and tries to figure out what the bird means by saying "Nevermore." The speaker watches the raven, whose eyes stare at him, and rests his head on a velvet cushion, reminding him of his lost love, whose memory presses into him. The speaker thinks the air grows denser and perfumed, believing the angels have sent him rest and relief from his sorrow of Lenore's death. He tells himself to inhale the drug to forget Lenore, and the raven again says "Nevermore." The speaker asks the raven if there is healing for his sorrow and Lenore's suffering, but the raven again says, "Nevermore." The speaker asks the raven if heaven holds his love Lenore, and the raven again says, "Nevermore." The speaker orders the raven out for lying about Lenore, and the raven again says, "Nevermore." The raven just sits on the bust of Pallas, his shadow on the floor, and the speaker says his soul is under the dark shadow on the floor, "nevermore" to be lifted out.

2. List some examples of alliteration in "The Raven," and explain the rhyme scheme that Poe uses.

Weak and weary; nodded, nearly napping; rare and radiant; entreating entrance; doubting, dreaming dreams; stepped a stately; bird or beast upon the sculptured bust; feather then he fluttered; followed fast and followed faster; grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt; velvet violet; faint foot-falls; home by horror haunted....

Poe's rhyme scheme includes internal rhymes in the first and second lines of each stanza, and in the third line of each stanza; the second line ends in an "or" sound and rhymes with the fourth, fifth, and sixth lines of each stanza.

3. Why do you think Poe chose a raven, rather than some other bird (or even a different animal) to appear at the speaker's door?

It is black and ominous, which reminds the reader of death and sorrow.

4. Do you think the raven is, as the speaker believes, simply repeating a phrase he heard, or do you think he is an agent sent from heaven? Why?

Answers will vary.

5. What does the raven appear to symbolize to the speaker, as mentioned in line 101?

"Take thy beak from out my heart" indicates that the raven represents the poet's grief at the loss of his love Lenore.

Week 11, Day 2: Sonnet—To Science

1. What does Poe accuse "Science" of doing in "Sonnet—To Science"?

He accuses Science of ruining the beauty of nature for poets and others.

When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer

2. Explain Whitman's feelings toward the "learn'd astronomer."

Whitman hates the technical aspects of nature, saying he prefers the beauty of nature instead.

3. How are these two poems similar in theme? How can the viewpoint of both the authors be taken to an unfruitful extreme?

Both prefer enjoying nature to learning about it methodically and systematically, believing that doing that strips nature of its beauty. This view can be taken to an unfruitful extreme by insisting that knowledge about God's creation is a waste of time, when, in fact, scientific pursuits, or "thinking God's thoughts after Him," as scientist Johannes Kepler put it, can be a great benefit to mankind and honoring to God.

Week 11, Day 3: The Stolen White Elephant

1. Describe the character of Inspector Blunt. Give details describing the preposterous way he handles the case.

He is not "sharp," but Blunt—an incompetent blowhard of an inspector. He spends money excessively, asks the civil servant ridiculous questions that are supposed to help him identify and find the elephant, sends detectives out on wild goose chases, and ignores or doesn't see the significance of obvious clues.

2. Name some absurd or funny things that happen during the search for the "stolen" elephant.

The questions Inspector Blunt ask the civil servant about Jumbo, Jumbo's real and common name, the contents of the absurd telegraphs the detectives send Blunt, the funny things the elephant breaks up (temperance meetings, funerals, etc.), and so on.

3. What is unusual (and ridiculous) about the various theories offered for the elephant's disappearance?

It is impossible for all of them to be accurate at the same time!

4. Sum up the status of both the elephant and the civil servant at the story's end.

The elephant dies, shot by cannons, and the civil servant is broke and ruined.

5. List some similarities between Inspector Blunt and the stolen white elephant.

Both receive "honor" and "worship."

6. What does the term "white elephant" mean, and why is the term significant? (Ask Mom what a "white elephant sale" is for more insight.)

A "white elephant" is a useless, expensive gift. White elephant sales feature these.

7. Other than to entertain, what other goal do you think Mark Twain might have had in mind by writing this story?

To poke fun at the public's tendency to idolize police inspectors as geniuses, and possibly to parody the detective genre.

Week 12, Day 1: Walden, Chapter II: Where I Lived, and What I Lived For

1. Describe the house Thoreau lives in in the woods. How is it better than his previous “homes”?

It is rustic, not weatherproof, fresh and open, clean-smelling. It is better than the boat and the tent he lived in previously.

2. Why does Thoreau say he went to live in the woods?

Thoreau says he went to live in the woods to “live deliberately,” to see if nature could teach him about life, to make sure he had “lived,” to “live deep.”

3. In the second-to-last paragraph, how does Thoreau compare a person’s standing “face to face with a fact” to a scimitar?

He says that looking straight at a fact is like looking on the blade of a scimitar and seeing both sides that shine from the sunlight. The fact you face cuts into you, and prepares you to change how you approach life.

4. Explain the meanings of these sayings found in *Walden*:

- “To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts.”

The greatest accomplishment a person can make is to make an impact upon the day that he lives.

- “Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity!”

People should simplify their lives, and reduce things that clutter up their thoughts and time.

- “Men think that it is essential that the Nation have commerce, and export ice, and talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles an hour, without a doubt, whether they do or not; but whether we should live like baboons or like men, is a little uncertain.”

Again, Thoreau is saying that technology does not necessarily improve our lives.

- “The preacher, instead of vexing the ears of drowsy farmers on their day of rest at the end of the week...should shout with thundering voice, “Pause! Avast! Why so seeming fast, but deadly slow?”

Preachers should tell congregations to slow down, instead of preaching sermons.

- “Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature, and not be thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito’s wing that falls on the rails.”

Don’t let the worries of the day keep you from doing what you need to do.

- “I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born.”

Thoreau believes that the early part of his life has been somewhat wasted with learning things he doesn’t think are important, and instilling into him ideas that keep him from living his life freely.

5. Do you agree with Thoreau that things like railroads, post offices, telegraphs, and newspapers (of course, in our day, this might compare to cars, email, cell phones, and the Internet) are unnecessary? Why or why not?

Answers will vary.

6. How does a Christian respond to Thoreau's (a) apparent desire to isolate himself from the world, (b) philosophy that getting back to nature gives life meaning, and (c) call for simplicity in living?

First, Christians are commanded not to love "the things that are in the world" (1 John 2:15). But we are commanded to go "into all the world" (Mark 16:15), and that we will be around sinners, or else we would have to "go out of the world" (1 Corinthians 5:10).

Second, Thoreau teaches that Thoreau makes the case that a simple life in nature gives life meaning for mankind; he gives no effort to credit God's provision for man through Christ's death as making life meaningful. In this way Thoreau appears to line up with those who "worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator" (Romans 1:25).

Last, Christians can appreciate Thoreau's call for more simple living. Thoreau was partly denouncing the lifestyles of many who live too much for the cares of this world. God's Word says:

- "I [Paul] have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Philippians 4:11).
- "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (1 Timothy 6:6-8).
- "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).

Week 12, Day 2: An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge

1. What kind of mood does Bierce create with how he opens "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge"?

He creates a cold, calculated, unfeeling mood, partly by listing step by step the actions of the silent and obedient soldiers in doing a very unpleasant duty, with apparently no emotion at all.

2. How does Peyton Farquhar's watch's ticking sound to him? Why?

To him it sounds incredibly loud and metallic, like a death knell. It seems to him as if the space between ticks (or seconds) gets longer and longer.

3. What do we learn about Peyton Farquhar in Part II?

He is a planter, about 35 years old, wealthy, from a respected family, a slave owner, and did not serve in the army as most men his age would have.

4. Who is the "gray-clad soldier" that stops by Farquhar's home to ask for a drink of water? What information does he tell Farquhar?

He is a Union scout disguised as a rebel soldier. He baits Farquhar into volunteering to try to help the South by destroying the bridge, mentioning clearly that the Union army has said that anyone caught doing that would be hanged.

5. Describe the "rope breaking" scene. What happens to Farquhar's senses? What dangers does he sense around himself?

Peyton Farquhar's rope seems to break as he is hanged, and he falls into the water. His senses are sharply tuned to his pain and suffering, and he tries mightily to get the ropes off his hands and get to the surface so he can breathe. He is able to see in sharp focus things like individual trees and insects, colors, and can also hear loudly every sound around him in great detail. He struggles to avoid the soldiers' firing upon him, diving deeply into the water.

6. Give examples of how Bierce places images of beauty next to ugliness, and pleasant sounds with threatening sounds.

Farquhar's heightened senses allow him to see sharply focuses images of nature, as well as the inviting sight of his home and wife running to greet him, with scenes of preparations for a hanging, and ultimately, the hanging itself. The sounds Farquhar hears vary, from relaxing sounds of the running waters and the forest, to unpleasant sounds like voices shouting "Ready! Aim! Fire!" and other grotesque cries, and the whistle of gunfire close to him.

7. Give the name of the literary technique that Bierce uses in the opening to Part II. What purposes does this serve?

Flashback. It gives the reader background information on the story, and helps to build suspense.

8. What happens to the verb tense in the next-to-last paragraph? Why do you suppose Bierce does this?

The verb tense changes to the present tense. It might be Bierce's way of hinting that what Farquhar is experiencing in this paragraph is not real.

9. Does Bierce give the reader any hints or clues on what is going to happen at the end of the story?

Answers will vary, but here are a few:

- *Farquhar falls down, loses consciousness, and is "as one already dead."*
- *Farquhar awakens "ages later, it seemed to him."*
- *The forest Farquhar runs down seems "interminable" and strange to him, even though he was familiar with the area.*
- *The road Farquhar finds is wide and straight, but totally uninhabited by man or beast—only by the "black bodies of the trees."*

10. What kind of worldview does Ambrose Bierce promote in "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge"? What might the various stages of Peyton Farquhar's "occurrence" represent? How does a Christian respond to Bierce's worldview? (See for example James 4:14, 1 Peter 1:24, John 3:16, Hebrews 11:6, James 4:8, 1 Peter 1:3-5.)

Bierce presents life as a senseless, meaningless, hopeless journey that offers mostly ugliness and pain, and even though a person seems to have hope, even that can hope be taken away from him in the end.

The stages of Farquhar's "occurrence" might represent life in general:

- *Birth – The breaking of the rope is similar to the cutting of an umbilical cord.*
- *Life – A journey, whether down a road or down a river (used by Mark Twain, for example, in his Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, has long been used by authors to symbolize the journey of life itself. In Peyton Farquhar's (short) journey down the river, he encounters a few pleasurable sights and sounds (nature, animals, and so on), but mostly pain and ugliness.*
- *Death – Bierce presents death as a journey into nothingness, blackness, where no one else is present (the empty road in the story), and pointless.*

The Christian's view of life includes these:

- *Although life is a “vapor” (James 4:14, 1 Peter 1:24) God has a purpose for it.*
- *God created mankind and loves his creation (John 3:16).*
- *God draws near to those who draw near to and diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6, James 4:8).*
- *God offers a “lively hope” and a resurrection from the dead “that fadeth not away” (1 Peter 1:3-5) to those who put their faith in Jesus Christ.*

Week 12, Day 3: How To Watch a Chess Match

Do you have a hobby or interest that others don't share, or can't see any enjoyment in either participating or watching? What is it?

Week 13, Day 1 – Chapter I: A Slave of Slaves

1. How does Booker T. Washington's knowledge of his past differ from that of most? Why? What is his reaction to this?

Washington knows very little about his background—not even when and where he was born. This has happened because he was born a slave. He is not angry or particularly bothered about his lack of knowledge of his background.

2. Describe Washington's childhood cabin and how it presented difficulties.

It had no floor except dirt, and was cold in the winter because of the many openings in the walls, and hot in the summer, because it had an open fire in the middle of the floor. He sleeps with his brother and sister on the floor on rags.

3. What kind of work did Washington perform as a child? Why does he dread bringing corn to the mill?

The corn often fell off the horse, and he had to wait for help, sometimes until dark—and the dark frightened him, as well as the prospect of being found by deserted Union soldiers that rumor had it lurked in the woods. Washington also faced a whipping if he was late.

4. What were Washington's recollections on the war and slavery? How were slaves informed of war-related news?

He believed that the primary issue was slavery, and that slavery would be ended if the North won. The slaves were often better and more quickly informed of war news than their masters, through contacts at the post office.

5. Name several occurrences that show that Washington and many other slaves were treated as less than human.

The squalid living conditions, lack of records of birthdates, lack of traditional mealtimes, lower quality of food, and so on.

6. What two major impressions does the issue of wearing flax shirts make upon Washington?

The fact that they were so rough to wear, and how generous his brother John is in helping Booker wear down the roughness by volunteering to wear the shirt first for a while.

7. How does Washington explain the feelings that slaves had for their masters? Give specific examples.

He says there was no hatred toward them if the slaves were treated decently. They also truly mourned the death of one of the plantation's masters, volunteered to help the masters who returned wounded from the war, and considered it an honor to be chosen to sleep in the "big house" to protect the children and mistresses. Washington also recounts examples of former slaves helping their now-down-and-out former masters, and of one former slave who bought his freedom from his former master, even though he was no longer obligated to do so.

8. Whom does Washington blame for the institution of slavery in America? What do the United States Constitution's Article I, Section 9 and Article IV, Section 2 say about slavery? How does he compare blacks in America to others around the world?

No one side, since all over the nation the institution was protected and supported, even by the United States Constitution. Article I, Section 9 provides for the importation of slaves into America until 1808; Article IV, Section 2 mandates that runaway slaves be returned to their masters. Washington says that blacks in America have a much better situation "materially, intellectually, morally, and religiously" than any other blacks around the world.

9. Explain Washington's thoughts on slavery and God's purpose. How does he say slavery hurt whites and helped slaves?

He recognizes that slavery was not God's plan, but instead done for selfish and monetary reasons, but that God takes evil plans and turns them to serve His own purposes. Washington says that slavery hurt whites by degrading work, to the point that many white children never learned a trade of any kind; and that it helped former slaves survive by providing them with work experience.

10. Explain the reaction of slaves to the imminent end of the war, and to their calling to the "big house." What feelings do the former slaves go through when the announcement is made?

They watch out for Union soldiers' theft of property, burying valuables and guarding them; they sing more loudly about freedom. They are told they are free at the meeting at the masters' house. The former slaves are ecstatic about being free, but soon soberly contemplating their new responsibilities to take care of themselves and their families.

Week 13, Day 2 – Chapter II: Boyhood Days

1. Explain how former slaves' name changes enhanced their feelings of freedom.

They no longer took the names of their former masters, and felt like individuals, not property.

2. Why does Booker T. Washington's family move? Describe the trip.

His mother's husband sends for them to come to him. It is a long, arduous trip on foot, over several hundred miles.

3. How is life in Malden for Washington? How does it compare to his former life?

The cabin he lives in is surrounded by other cabins, with their inhabitants engaged in all sorts of immorality. He is put to work, sometimes going to work as early as 4 AM (at about age 9-10).

4. What above all else does Washington desire to do? How does his mother assist him? How does his stepfather thwart his attempts? Explain how Washington crafts a compromise and gets to the school on time.

He wants to read. His mother finds a spelling book and encourages him. His stepfather discovers that Washington can make money, so he keeps him out of school and puts him in the salt furnaces. He is finally allowed to go to school as long as he goes to work before and after, and since he is only allowed to leave at 9 AM (the same time classes start), he moves the furnace's clock hands forward from 8:30 to 9:00 until it is discovered.

5. How does the school change the town? What is the touching “great ambition” of the older former slaves?

Former slaves crowd around and pay to be educated and learn to read. The older blacks are anxious to be able to read the Bible before they die.

6. List several lessons Washington learns from the “cap” incident.

First, not to pretend he is something he is not (in this case, that his mother could afford a store-bought cap.) Second, not to go into debt just to fit in. Third, that possessing things like caps doesn't change anyone's character (Washington says that some of the boys wearing store-bought caps are now in prison, while he is not, though he didn't have one).

7. Why does Booker invent a last name for himself? Why do you think he chose the one he did? What is he thankful for regarding his lack of ancestry? Explain his reasoning that lack of ancestry has hurt black boys.

So he wouldn't stand out in school, where all the other children had two names. He probably chose “Washington” after the President. Washington is thankful that he had no distinguished ancestry, or he might have relied on it instead of his own efforts, and he is determined to make his name one his children can be proud of. He says that lack of family histories has hurt black boys, who are not as motivated as white boys to resist temptation—and therefore, shame their families.

8. Why does Washington hate coal-mine work? How does this mirror his earlier hatred of delivering corn from the mill?

Coal mine work is dark, dirty, and dangerous, and Washington gets lost in the dark occasionally. It is similar to his work delivering corn from the mill because he is sometimes helpless and dependent upon others to help him out of his vulnerable situation.

9. Why does Washington first envy, and then later almost pity white boys? What point does he make about race and privilege?

Washington envies their opportunities for limitless advancement, but later realizes that people admire others for the obstacles they have overcome. He realizes that blacks have to overcome more obstacles than whites, and that this fact has added to the development of his character. He notes that there are many who believe they should obtain privileges because of their race, but says that races matters little—the individual's efforts are what matters.

Chapter III: The Struggle for an Education

1. What things does Washington gain from his employment with Mrs. Ruffner?

Getting out of the coal mines, an appreciation for neatness and thoroughness, and friendship.

2. Give evidence that an education is extremely important to Washington. What emotions of his are touched by incidents surrounding his desire to go to the Hampton Institute?

He creates his own "library," he determines that he will get to the Hampton Institute no matter the cost, he leaves with very little money and not even knowing what to expect, and he walks around the hotel on a cold night, not allowed to come in.

Washington leaves, not believing he'll ever see his mother again, and other blacks who realize what he's trying to do touch his emotions by contributing little bits of money.

3. Describe Washington's "entrance exam" into the Hampton Institute.

He has to sweep and dust a room!

4. What kind of man is Samuel C. Armstrong?

A great man who is influential and inspiring, and good enough, according to Washington, that anyone who spent time around him could get a great education.

5. What do baths represent to Washington?

Order, cleanliness, self-respect, virtue.

6. Why do you suppose that things keep "happening" to Washington (finding a job, getting enough money, being admitted to the school, receiving needed clothing, and so on)?

His "luck" is really a result of his hard work, his attitude, and his friendliness toward others.

Week 13, Day 3 – Chapter IV: Helping Others

1. Instead of in textbooks, what kind of learning do we see Booker T. Washington experiencing at the Hampton Institute?

Learning about thriftiness, hard work, honesty, helping others, contentment, and taking advantage of situations that present themselves.

2. What does the Bible come to mean to Washington? How does the reader see its importance?

Good literature, for one, but also spiritual help. He reads chapters every day before he starts work.

3. Describe Washington's visit to his home.

The miners are on strike. Washington can't find work because of the strike, which makes him worry he won't be able to return to school. His mother dies, which saddens him greatly.

4. How does Mrs. Ruffner prove useful?

She helps provide Washington with work, and thus money and a way to get back to school.

5. What lesson does Miss Mackie teach Booker T. Washington?

The dignity of labor, by her hard work to prepare the school for the new semester, even though she came from a highly cultured family.

6. What does Washington say are the greatest two things he got from the Hampton Institute?

Knowing General Armstrong, and learning the value of doing work that brings value and happiness to others.

7. Describe Washington's activities back in Malden. What significance does he place on the toothbrush? Why? How does he assist his brothers John and James?

He takes a position as teacher, working on teaching cleanliness to the students—some as old as 50—as well as book learning. He also teaches Sunday school and debate teams. He tries to help others in any way he can.

The toothbrush to Washington represents order and civilization.

He helps his brothers by saving to send them to school, as John helped him to do.

Chapter V: The Reconstruction Period

1. Why does Washington say that some blacks during Reconstruction often attempted to learn Latin and Greek? Why did some want to become teachers or preachers?

In a misguided attempt to avoid manual labor, or to make an easy living.

2. What criticism and praise does Washington have for the U. S. government's actions during Reconstruction? Explain his view on "the franchise," and why he believed this way.

They gave slaves their freedom, but didn't prepare them to be independent like they should. Washington believed that only blacks (or whites, for that matter) who owned property should be allowed to vote, certainly because they had more at stake and would be less likely to view the property of others as something up for a vote.

3. How does Washington feel that Reconstruction was used by unscrupulous and vengeful whites? How does Washington see this ending? What does he suggest blacks do instead of attempting to procure supervisory positions over whites?

To pay back Southern whites by placing former slaves over them in government positions. Washington predicted that this would end badly for blacks (which it did). He states that blacks should focus more on learning skills and gaining property.

4. What is the chief difference in the school Washington attends in Washington, D. C. and the Hampton Institute? Which does he believe is better, and why?

The students have everything paid for them in D. C., unlike at the Hampton Institute. Washington believes Hampton is better, since the students learn the value of hard work.

Week 14, Day 1 – Chapter VI: Black Race and Red Race

1. Explain why Washington refuses offers to enter political life after his stumping for Charleston to be named

the new capital of West Virginia.

He believes he can do more good by working in a position that encourages thrift and hard work among former slaves.

2. Give several reasons why the trip back to Hampton brings pleasure to Washington. How is Armstrong's offer to Washington especially meaningful and appropriate?

He is pleased that General Armstrong thought of him, he wants to return, the train ride is much more pleasant than the first time he traveled to Hampton, he is welcomed warmly, and he discovers that Hampton is doing even more to help blacks assimilate into society and learn useful skills.

Armstrong asks Washington to help with a program to educate American Indians. This is especially appropriate, since Washington himself benefited from the help of others in his assimilation into society after he received his freedom.

3. How does Washington succeed with the American Indians? What does this say about "races" and humanity in general? What is the Biblical view of "races"? (See Acts 17:24-26.)

He treats them with kindness and respect, and they respond in turn. No matter where someone is from, he will in general respond well to kindness from others. The Bible teaches that God has made all nations of "one blood."

4. How is Frederick Douglass's example of "degradation" actually a degradation of the Pennsylvania railroad company's owners? Explain Washington's "complexion" point at the dining saloon.

They degraded themselves by treating Douglass as if he were a lower form of humanity. Washington points out that he is excluded from the railroad dining car, although an Indian is allowed, even though both men are about the same color.

5. Describe the "Plucky Class" that Washington teaches at Hampton. What two major satisfactions does he have in beginning this class?

They are a hard-working group of 12 men and women who earnestly desire an education. They work 10 hours a day and do manual labor for two in exchange for their board. Washington is gratified at the fact that (1) these 12 students later all held important positions in the South, and (2) the program had grown at the time of his writing to 300-400 students and an important part of Hampton.

Chapter VII: Early Days at Tuskegee

1. What is ironic about Tuskegee University's request to General Armstrong?

They are educating blacks, but it doesn't occur to them that a black man would be suitable to fill the position at their university to educate other blacks. (Does education work for blacks, or doesn't it?)

2. Why is the area Washington moves to called the "Black Belt"? What pleases him about Tuskegee?

First, the soil is thick, rick, and dark. Second, the number of blacks outnumbers the whites in a ratio from three to one to six to one. Washington is pleased that there is good culture, the students are eager to learn, the relations between blacks and whites are generally good, and that vices among blacks are much lower than in the big cities.

3. How does Washington again encounter political pressure from others? What is his reaction?

Some blacks want him to vote exactly as they do, telling him that the correct way to vote is exactly the opposite of how whites vote. Washington remarks that he believes this way of thinking is disappearing, and that he is glad to see it.

4. What does Washington do to prepare for his work? What does he find out in his travels and stays with the black families in the area?

He travels around the area, drumming up support and telling people about Tuskegee. He finds out the diets of the people, what they're like, that cotton is the main crop, and that they are ignorant that they could grow much of their own food. They also buy frivolous items such as a sixty-dollar organ instead of needs like forks.

5. Why does Washington say he writes about the unfortunate and backwards condition of the places and families and schools he visits?

To truthfully record the conditions, and to give a contrast that shows what institutions like Tuskegee University have accomplished in the area.

Week 14, Day 2 – Chapter VIII: Teaching School in a Stable and a Hen-house

1. Why do some oppose the opening of the school run by Washington?

They imagine that blacks will leave the farms, turn into fancy-pants types who won't work, and that it will be trouble between blacks and whites.

2. How are Mr. Adams and Mr. Campbell different? How are they alike?

Their backgrounds (one white, one an ex-slave) were different, but both are very supportive of Tuskegee, and both are highly educated, according to the view of Washington.

3. Explain why Washington is deeply saddened by the sight of a young man who is studying a French grammar, and surrounded by filth and a weedy garden.

This is wasteful to Washington—filling children's minds with things that are not as useful as how to make a living and being civilized—that is, practical, useful work is seen by some as less important than "high learning."

4. Describe Olivia Davidson. What do you think attracted Washington to her? What about Miss Davidson is not described by Washington?

A young black woman of high moral character and unselfishness. Her background, love for others, and refusal to pretend to be white are what Washington mentions about her—not her physical beauty.

5. What does Washington say that he and Miss Davidson want to make sure their students receive from their education at Tuskegee above all else? What worrisome fact do they learn from talking to the students?

A way they can make a living, more than "book learning." They learn that most of the students are going to school so they don't have to work with their hands.

6. Explain how the mansion and plantation suit Washington's purposes for educating students. How does he overcome their resistance to doing work that they think is beneath them?

The land provides opportunities to show students how to grow crops. Washington overcomes the students' resistance by marching out with an axe himself to work.

Chapter IX: Anxious Days and Sleepless Nights

1. How does the way that many of the townspeople celebrate Christmas affect Washington? What do you think this represents to him? What contrasting examples does he give of how others celebrate Christmas?

He is disturbed at their reveling and lack of appreciation for the sacredness of the celebration of Christ's coming. It represents ignorance and lack of moral character. Many, however, are extremely charitable during Christmas (giving coats, helping build cabins for the elderly, and so on).

2. Washington meets an old man who says God does not want man to work. Is this true? (See John 5:17, 1 Thessalonians 4:9-13, Acts 20:35, 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10.)

No. The Bible teaches that Jesus worked, that we should "work with [our] own hands," work to support the weak, and that anyone who won't work should not eat.

3. Explain the three main reasons that obtaining the deed for the 100-acre property is satisfying to Washington and those who helped with it. Why do you think the sawmill owner is so willing to give lumber up front without payment?

First, they paid it off with their hard work. Second, blacks and whites worked together to pay off the debt. Third, they are happy to have a permanent place for the school. The sawmill owner probably sees the good in the community that the school is doing, and puts his faith in Washington—therefore he is willing to give the lumber upon promise of payment.

4. How does Olivia Davidson help with the building? Describe her health.

She meets with many people to procure funds, to the detriment of her health, because she is not a very strong person.

5. Why, to Washington, is the pressure of keeping the institution going and paying for the new buildings particularly trying?

He believes that the failure of the institution would damage the possibilities of additional black schools' being built.

Week 14, Day 3 – Chapter X: A Harder Task Than Making Bricks Without Straw

1. Why does Washington insist that the new buildings be built by students?

He wants to teach them how to build, how to learn, how to develop a love for labor, and how to gain the satisfaction of having completed something themselves.

2. What lesson do Washington and the students of Tuskegee learn from brickmaking? How does their success affect their standing in the community? How does it affect relations between the black and white "races"?

Perseverance, sacrifice, hard work. Their success makes business contact and customers for themselves, and increases the value of their school in the eyes of the community, since they are producing things of value.

White and black relations are improved, according to Washington, because whites see blacks adding to the wealth of the community.

3. What is your take on the parents who would like their children to go to Tuskegee, but protest the requirement that students do manual labor?

Answers will vary.

4. Does the recalling of numerous failures and shortcomings of Tuskegee discourage you as a reader? Why or why not?

Answers will vary, but most readers should be encouraged, since Washington recounts how he and the students were successful through numerous attempts at building and fixing items throughout the school.

Week 14, Day 4 – Chapter XI: Making Their Beds Before They Could Lie on Them

1. What does Washington learn from General Armstrong?

That great men are forgiving and not bitter—as Armstrong was toward Southern white men, whom he had fought in the North/South War.

2. How does Washington say that prejudice and wrongdoing against blacks by whites hurts whites more than it does blacks?

It hurts their character, making them vulnerable to being untrustworthy in other endeavors, and making them susceptible to cheating anyone else, black or white.

3. What is your take on how Washington behaves on the train to avoid offending or creating a confrontation with other passengers? Do you think he is giving in to prejudice too easily, or showing character? How does the situation pan out?

Answers will vary. Washington avoids eating with and sitting with white women when he perceives that some white passengers would take offense. The men later speak cordially to Washington.

4. Explain the importance of toothbrushes and baths to Washington, and the meaning of his exhortation to his students: “[P]eople would excuse us for our poverty, for our lack of comforts and conveniences, but that they would not excuse us for dirt.”

Toothbrushes and baths represent civilization and orderliness. As for his exhortation about poverty, the meaning is this: There is no shame in being poor, because it doesn’t necessarily reflect badly upon a person, especially a young person, but being dirty shows a lack of character, and lack of work ethic, since anyone can be clean.

Week 15, Day 1 – Chapter XII: Raising Money

1. Give Washington’s two rules for the “science of begging.”

Clearly make the details of your work known, and don’t worry about the results.

2. Explain why Washington has no patience for those who criticize the wealth simply for being wealthy, and not giving what they think is enough to charity.

First, taking a large part of money from the rich would hurt others tremendously. Second, the rich are constantly besieged with requests for money from others. Third, the amount of money given away by the wealthy is often kept secret.

3. What “compensations” does Washington receive from going around the country trying to secure funds for Tuskegee?

Learning about human nature and meeting people.

4. What lesson does Washington learn from the meeting with the gentleman in Connecticut, and from his meetings with Collis P. Huntington?

That visits might not pay off immediately (since the gentleman from Connecticut waited two years to contribute to Tuskegee), and that persistence can keep donations coming from someone like Huntington, who was only able to give two dollars at first, but later gave fifty thousand dollars.

5. Why do you think Washington is so successful in raising money from (a) wealthy benefactors, and (b) ordinary people who give small donations?

Answers will vary, but Washington is very persuasive in an upright and honest way, giving tangible evidence that money donated to Tuskegee would benefit black students, enabling them to lift themselves up. Wealthy benefactors see the hard work students do in building, improving themselves, and learning useful skills, which attracts them. Ordinary people see Washington’s earnestness, and they realize the good that the school has done.

Chapter XIII: Two Thousand Miles for a Five-minute Speech

1. How do you think a requirement to work a ten-hour day to receive two hours of education would go over with young persons in today’s society? Why?

Answers will vary. Probably most young persons would balk at the idea, since there is more of an entitlement mentality in today’s society.

2. Whom does Washington marry? Explain the joy and sorrow he receives after their marriage.

Olivia Davidson, his coworker. She dies four years later, but not before giving birth to two sons.

3. What is Washington’s philosophy on criticizing people in speech? Why?

Not to criticize unless he is in the area, and it is deserved, and to praise if possible rather than to criticize. He believes this works better to effect change.

4. What is Washington’s main idea in his speech in Wisconsin about “the future of the Negro”?

That people will accept and respect blacks more if they become useful to society and produce wealth for themselves and others.

5. In his speech before Congress in favor of the Atlanta Exposition, what does Washington say will do more for blacks than the political process?

Property, industry, skill, economy, intelligence, and character.

6. Describe Washington’s preparation for his speech at the exposition. How is this similar to the way he approaches everything else he does?

He thinks carefully, works hard, considers his audience, tests it before his students, and prays God’s blessing upon it. This is how Washington does everything else he does, from manual labor to getting support.

Week 15, Day 2 – Chapter XIV: The Atlanta Exposition Address

1. What does Washington mean by the injunction “Cast down your bucket where you are!” to (a) the “black race” and (b) the “white race”?

First, that former slaves should cultivate friendships with those around them, and learn to be self-sufficient through their labour, rather than look to others—especially the Federal government—to bring them up. Second, that whites should not look to foreigners first to increase the prosperity of the United States, but to the blacks that already live there.

2. Explain this passage from Washington’s speech: “The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing.”

Washington means that the immediate pressing of equality of blacks with whites using government force is doomed to fail, and that true equality instead will come from a slow, laborious process.

3. What is the crowd’s reaction to Washington’s speech? The press and other reactions? How does Washington respond to the offers he receives?

Washington is heartily congratulated, the press praises him, and he is given many lucrative offers for his services. He turns them down, even though he would be essentially a millionaire in our day, because he feels he has important work at Tuskegee.

4. What does Washington mean by saying, “No man whose vision is bounded by color can come into contact with what is highest and best in the world”?

That a person so small-minded as to hold prejudicial views against another “race” will be small-minded in other ways too, and miss out on many great things in the world.

5. Washington says that some blacks saw his speech as too forgiving and not demanding enough of rights for blacks. How would you respond to this charge? Also, his remarks on black ministers struck a wrong chord with many blacks. How would you respond to these?

Answers will vary, but Washington is, first, trying to ensure that Southern whites do not feel resentment toward blacks because they are being forced to do something they don’t want to do, which he believes will lead to a more lasting, peaceful coexistence and full equality.

Second, trying to honestly point out shortcomings of many blacks who called themselves “ministers,” which should result in greater integrity among those who truly are called.

6. What does Washington see as a solution to voting rights?

Complete equality among all “races”—even if there are requirements for literacy or property ownership—in voting rights.

Chapter XV: The Secret of Success in Public Speaking

1. What does Washington say about nervousness in public speaking?

That he is quite nervous each time he speaks, and that he attempts to overcome this by forging a link between himself and the audience.

2. What does Washington say is the most disturbing thing that happens to him while giving a public speech? How does he say he tries to keep this from happening?

Someone leaving in the middle of the speech. He tries to prevent this by making sure his speech is interesting and full of facts.

3. Do you think that Washington's reprints of the favorable press reports of his speeches sound like bragging? Why or why not?

Answers will vary.

Week 15, Day 3 – Chapter XVI: Europe

1. Why do some of Washington's friends take up a collection for him and his wife to go to Europe? Why does Washington protest to them, and what worries does he have about the vacation?

They are worried about his health, that he is working too hard, and looks tired. He insists that he can't leave Tuskegee, saying it will fail financially, but they get him a replacement and assure him it will survive without him for four months. Washington worries that by taking a vacation he will look lazy and as if he were flaunting his success.

2. What lesson does Washington say is reinforced by his learning about Mr. Henry O. Tanner? How does this remind him of his first visit to Hampton, where he swept the schoolroom?

That recognition of talent and hard work will eventually trump prejudice and ignorance regarding race. Washington worked hard to do a perfect job at sweeping, and he was rewarded with entrance to the school.

3. What conclusion does Washington come to after reading a book on board a ship on the life of Frederic Douglass? Why?

That race relations are improving. Mr. Douglass writes about how he was confined to a small portion of a ship he was on, and not too many years later, Washington is treated as an honored guest aboard a ship.

4. What is humorous and ironic about the fact that Washington's invitation by the committee in Charleston is held in an opera-house?

Washington previously state in Up From Slavery that former slaves attempting to better themselves should remember: "The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera-house." Washington has done the former, and now is enjoying the latter!

Week 15, Day 4 – Chapter XVII: Last Words

1. What does Washington say is the greatest surprise he ever received in his life? What emotions does it bring him?

The honorary degree from Harvard University. He wonders at how he ever could have received it, being from such humble beginnings.

2. Name Washington's secret resolution. What does he learn about the white people of Tuskegee that he did not know until then?

To invite the President to Tuskegee. He realizes how proud they are of the school.

3. List the three goals of Tuskegee's industrial teaching.

(1) Students will be well educated, (2) students will be prepared to make a living for themselves and others, and (3) students will realize the beauty and dignity of labor.

4. How does Washington argue that educating blacks in institutions like Tuskegee is improving race relations?

He believes that blacks learning to improve their "material, educational, moral, and religious life" will impress whites, who will see the value of it.

Week 16, Day 1: How the Captain Made Christmas

1. Are old Christmas (or old times) always better? Why do many think that claim is true?

Answers will vary!

2. Name one piece of advice that the Captain gives the young man—or name one act the Captain performs—that made an impression on you.

Answers will vary!

Week 16, Day 2: The Gift of the Magi

1. Describe the story's setting. Who are the Dillinghams? What is their financial situation?

It is the day before Christmas in New York City for a young couple living in a shabby New York City apartment. Jim Dillingham doesn't make much money, and his wife Della despairs of finding a gift for him for only \$1.87.

2. Why are Jim's watch and Della's hair sources of such pride?

Jim's watch was passed down from his grandfather, and it is fine and beautiful. Della's hair is long and beautiful.

3. Why do you suppose O. Henry sets the price of Della's hair at \$20?

It is the same amount that Jim earns in a week, so the reader can see that this is a great amount for Della to spend on him. Also, since it is what Jim earns a week, the amount serves to link the two characters in the reader's mind.

4. Explain the story's ironic ending. How is the ending somehow not tragic and gloomy, as it could be? What contrasts greatly with the story's two pairs of "parted items" (the watch and the chain, and the hair and the combs)?

Although Della has sold her hair to buy Jim a chain for his watch, Jim has sold his watch to buy combs for her hair. The ending doesn't come across as tragic because of the lighthearted instances of humor that O. Henry sprinkles into the story, and the characterization of Jim and Della as such a loving and spirited married couple.

5. Why does O. Henry name this story "The Gift of the Magi"?

He compares the wise men to the two young people, whom he says are also wise, because of their true, unselfish love for each other. They also give precious gifts to each other, as the magi did to Jesus.

Week 17, Day 1: The Chambered Nautilus

1. What poetic language does the author use to describe the chambered nautilus in the first stanza?

He compares it to a great ship sailing the sea, with "purpled wings," with Sirens singing, and mermaids lying on coral reefs.

2. What is the chambered nautilus doing in the second and third stanzas?

Building up its shell, which it outgrows each year.

3. What lesson does Holmes take from the chambered nautilus, as presented in the fourth and fifth stanzas? How does this lesson compare to the Biblical worldview?

By telling his soul to "build thee more stately mansions," Holmes seems to be telling himself to build up his own soul under his own power and effort. He leaves God out of the equation, and even hints with his words "shut thee from heaven" (which at first seems to indicate the chambered nautilus's protection from the elements) that he wants to achieve independence from God. This is an evolutionist, pantheist, transcendentalist mindset that rejects God as ultimate ruler of the universe.

Week 17, Day 2: Poems of Emily Dickinson

Give some examples of "slant-rhymes" in the Emily Dickinson poems we read.

"Soul/all," "you/know," "to-day/victory," "eye/majority," "away/poetry."

Hope

1. What does Dickinson mean by the second stanza? (Rearranging the words in line five might clarify it.)

That hope is heard "sweetest" when the storm blows, or when times are hardest, and it would have to be a really bad "storm" to squash hope altogether.

2. What is a Christian's hope? (See Titus 2:11-14 and 1 Peter 1:3-5.)

A Christian's hope:

*“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for **that blessed hope**, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:11-14).*

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto **a lively hope** by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:3-5).*

I’m Nobody! Who Are You?

1. What is a “nobody,” according to this poem? Who are the “they” who would banish “nobodies”?

Apparently a “nobody” is a person who doesn’t conform to accepted normal behavior. The “they” are those who want conformity.

2. Who is a “somebody,” according to this poem? What is dreary about being a “somebody”? Why does Dickinson compare admirers of “somebodies” to a “bog”?

A “somebody” is a famous or popular person, which Dickinson says is dreary because all a “somebody” does is preen around with admirers. Dickinson compares the admirers to a “bog,” because they are apparently as unpleasant and mucky as a swamp.

Success

1. Why does Dickinson say success is counted “sweetest” by those who never succeed? What can’t even the victors do as well as the “defeated” and “dying,” according to the second and third stanzas?

Dickinson says that success is counted sweetest because it is longed for more by those who fail. She says that victors can’t even define “success” as well as those who don’t experience it.

2. What personal message might Dickinson be putting forth in this poem?

That she doesn’t think herself a success.

Much Madness Is Divinest Sense

1. What point does Dickinson make about much of what is called “sense” and “madness”? What can happen to those who object to the majority?

That often “sense” and “madness” are mixed up by most people. Those who object to the majority’s opinion can be shunned, castigated, and punished.

2. Give an example of how a Christian can find himself called “straightway dangerous” for not assenting to popular opinion.

Answers will vary.

A Book

How are books like “coursers” and “frigates”? How are books good for the “frugal”?

They enable readers to “take trips.” Books are available for even the poorest, “frugal” person to use, with the imagination, to go on a “journey.”

Week 17, Day 3: A Sisterly Scheme

1. What does the writer accomplish with the first paragraph?

It sets up the story in a way that is intriguing to the reader; he wonders at the possibilities of this place where visitors “go in,” and becomes more interested in what will happen in the story.

2. What occurs at the story’s beginning to set the plot in motion? What things do we learn about characters from what happens?

Mr. Morpeth is supposed to take a young lady (Pauline) out on a canoe trip, but she ditched him for another man, Mr. Brown, and the young lady’s sister (Flossy) starts a conversation with him about it. We learn that Mr. Morpeth is a little mopey and timid; that Pauline is inconsiderate and selfish; and that Flossy is a young woman, although a little brash and tomboyish.

3. What scheme does Flossy cook up? Why does she claim she is doing this for Mr. Morpeth?

She will help Mr. Morpeth by helping him to woo her, supposedly hoping to make her older sister jealous, culminating in his marriage proposal to her (an act, of course!). All the while, Flossy will “dangle” him as if he means nothing to her.

Flossy tells Mr. Morpeth she is willing to help him to get her sister off her back, and that she wants to experience some “liberty.”

4. How does the fake flirtation by Mr. Morpeth progress? What is the reaction of this to the people around them?

Morpeth “woos” Flossy; she treats him with disdain; the vacation crowd is in an uproar, especially Pauline.

5. Give some clues that hint at what Flossy’s actual plan is.

Morpeth tells Flossy, “Your scheme is a good one. Only—it involves the discovery of another girl.” This is true on two counts. First, Flossy’s scheme is indeed a good one! Second, her scheme does involve the “discovery of another girl”—Flossy plans for Morpeth to discover her!

Flossy also asks Morpeth if he thinks she’s “good-looking enough,” and makes sure he knows that she is eighteen years old.

The canoe trip with Pauline, Flossy, Mr. Brown, and Mr. Morpeth is described by saying first that in the canoe there were three sulky people and “one girl radiant with triumphant happiness” (Flossy).

Week 18, Day 1: A New England Nun

1. Name the two adverbs in the second paragraph that describe Louisa Ellis’s way of living. How does the fact that she can never remember losing one of her sewing accessories show what kind of person she is? List some other examples that show Louisa Ellis’s regular, deliberate, careful way of living.

“Precisely” and “carefully” are the two adverbs. The fact that she can’t remember losing any of her accessories demonstrates that her way of life is regular, ordered, and to her liking. She makes sure she hasn’t dropped any currant stems into the grass, she is “slow and still in her movements,” she arranges her solitary tea precisely, she methodically folds and arranges all of her clothing, either in wearing it or storing it.

2. How does Joe Dagget’s personality contrast with Louisa Ellis? Give examples of how this is shown. What is significant about Joe’s picking up the books on Louisa Ellis’s table, and her reaction? What else does he do to upset her home?

Joe steps heavily, seems to “fill up the whole room,” makes the canary jump wildly around the cage, he says, “Good evening” loudly. He doesn’t put the books down in the right place, and it bothers Louisa Ellis, who rearranges them as they were before. He also accidentally knocks her work-basket down and spills it, and he tracks in dust. Louisa Ellis’s reactions represent her lack of desire to “upset” her way of life by marrying Joe.

3. What is the first indication that something might be wrong with Joe (it happens in the first conversation between Joe and Louisa Ellis)? Why does he feel embarrassed?

He “colors” (turns red from embarrassment) when Louisa Ellis asks him if Lily Dyer is watching his mother. This is an admission that Joe has been “seeing” Lily Dyer often.

4. Sum up the agreement between Joe and Louisa Ellis. How do they feel about it now?

They were engaged, but decided to marry only after Joe made his fortune, which took 15 years! They both want to live up to their agreement by marrying, even though they don’t seem to want it as much anymore.

5. List some things that Louisa Ellis knows she will have to give up when she marries Joe.

Her pretty home, her distilling, her freedom to sew things she likes just for pleasure.

6. Explain Caesar’s background, temperament, and current situation. How does Joe view him?

He bit a neighbor as a puppy, and Louisa Ellis has chained him for 14 years, even though he’s gentle and wouldn’t hurt anyone. The town thinks he’s a fierce killer, but Joe knows better, and he wants to free him.

7. What is admirable about the conversation between Lily Dyer and Joe that Louisa Ellis overhears? How does Louisa Ellis tell Joe the next day? Describe how Joe is honorable and how Louisa Ellis reacts afterward.

The two agree that the only course of action is for Joe to marry Louisa Ellis, because it is honorable, and she has waited for 14 years for him. Louisa Ellis tells Joe she can’t marry him because she’s too set in her ways, and Joe offers to help her any way he can. Louisa Ellis weeps a little, but feels relieved, and is excited about her future life.

8. How does Caesar resemble (a) the canary, and (b) Louisa Ellis?

Caesar made a little mistake and paid for it for 14 years, being locked up. Louisa Ellis might have made a mistake by accepting Joe’s proposal, and stayed alone for 14 years. Caesar and the canary are also similar in that they are locked up.

9. Go back and read the first sentence in “A New England Nun.” What do you think the significance of this opening sentence could be?

It represents the fact that Louisa Ellis and Joe Dagget are growing older, and that their desire for marriage is dwindling.

10. Name at least one reason why Louisa's decision not to marry Joe is healthy, and one reason why it might not be healthy.

She is bowing out, knowing that Joe loves Lily Dyer, which is honorable, but part of the reason she does not to marry him is because he would upset her near-obsession with an orderly, dust-free existence.

11. The last line says that Louisa Ellis prayerfully numbers her days, "like an uncloistered nun" (i.e., she was free). Why, then, do you think author Mary Eleanor Wilkins Freeman titled the story "A New England Nun"?

Answers will vary, but it might be that Freeman viewed Louisa Ellis as still, in some ways, living a life as if she were shut up in a convent.

Week 18, Day 2: The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro

1. In the speech's opening, why does Douglass say he finds it difficult to celebrate July Fourth? What does he say the Fourth of July reminds him and slaves in America of?

Because of the plight of slaves in America. The Fourth of July only reminds him of the lack of freedom for slaves in America.

2. What does Douglass say to those who tell him he should be more persuasive and less confrontational?

He says that the truth is plain enough that (a) slaves are men, and (b) it is right to give them liberty, and no persuasion is needed; Americans simply need to act upon these clear truths.

3. How does Douglass prove slaves are men who deserve rights?

There were death penalties for crimes they commit; there were laws forbidding the teaching of reading and writing to them; slaves do intelligent work; they worship God in Christian churches.

4. Explain what Douglass means by this: "For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder."

Our country needs not gentle persuasion, but decisive action, to end slavery.

5. What gives Douglass hope for the United States?

The fact that slavery will fall, if for nothing else, because of the disapproval of other nations that trade with the United States.

6. Explain the meaning of the William Lloyd Garrison poem quoted by Douglass. Is it correct, or reasonable, to believe that on earth "that day will come all feuds to end" and "none on earth shall exercise a lordly power"?

It asks for the soon coming of the end of slavery and the end of tyranny all over the world. Garrison pledges to do all he can to end slavery. Garrison's goals, as state in the poem, of ending all "feuds" and eradicating all tyranny—slave owner or government—are far-fetched and implausible, given man's fallen world.

7. Explain the following New Testament passages concerning slavery: 1 Peter 2:18-19, 1 Timothy 1:9-10,

Matthew 8:5-7 (Think about it!), 1 Timothy 6:1-2, and Philemon 8-14. How should a Christian therefore act regarding the practice of slavery?

1 Peter 2:18-19 – “Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.”

Christian slaves should obey their masters, even unfair, mean ones. For Christians, it is honorable to endure wrongful suffering (like Christ did).

1 Timothy 1:9-10 – “...[T]he law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine....”

Those who work in the slave trade (“menstealers”) are unrighteous and lumped together with those who commit all kinds of other awful sins.

Matthew 8:5-7 – “And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.”

Jesus said nothing to the centurion about his need to free his slave, but instead agreed to heal the slave. This does not mean that Jesus approved of slavery, but that He was come to change the world at a much higher level than to simply remedy social evils.

1 Timothy 6:1-2 – “Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit.”

Christian slaves should honor their masters, so they won’t blaspheme God. Even Christians slaves who have Christian masters should not “despise” their masters.

Philemon 1:8-14 – “Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for love’s sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds: which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me: whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels: whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel: but without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.”

Paul says he has a right as an apostle of Jesus Christ to order Philemon to free his slave Onesimus, but he instead he appeals to Philemon to do it willingly

In short, Christians certainly should be among the first to see the unfairness of slavery, but our first mission in changing the world is through the power of Christ.

Week 18, Day 3: The Young Idea’s Shooting Gallery

1. Have you seen actual examples of the kind of child’s behavior and bad parenting that the author spoofs in this essay? Which ones?

Answers will vary!

2. What do you think the very last sentence of the essay means? (Hint: Look up Proverbs 22:15.)

Proverbs 22:15 says, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." This is probably Benchley's way of saying the kid was crying after getting spanked for his behavior.

Week 19, Day 1: Original Policy of the Administration

1. In the third paragraph, what does Lincoln assure southerners? What resolution does he say that those who nominated him for President support?

That he has no plans to get rid of slavery, since (a) the Constitution expressly allows it, and (b) he has no personal desire to end it. Those who put him in office (the Republican Party) supported a resolution that the government has no intention of ever interfering with the institution of slavery in slave states.

2. What does Lincoln mean by saying, "I hold that...the Union of these States is perpetual"? What does he say must happen first if the "contract" among the states can be dissolved?

That no state can leave the union. Lincoln says that the "contract" that binds the states together cannot be dissolved unless all states agree to dissolve it.

3. After declaring that the states had not actually seceded ("I therefore consider that...the Union is unbroken"), what war-like words does Lincoln use to say what will occur if the Southern states do not allow the collection of "duties and imposts"?

"Bloodshed," "violence," "invasion," and "using of force."

4. What does Lincoln say to those "who love the Union"? Sum up his argument that "minorities" cannot refuse to submit to a majority in a government. How would a statesman from a seceded state answer this argument?

That they should gravely consider their leaving the union, since their troubles might be worse if they do. Lincoln says that a minority cannot refuse to submit to a government where a majority rules, or else that government "must cease." The new government formed might have another split, and so on. To answer this argument, a secessionist might say that the government would not "cease"; it would simply not rule over that section of people.

5. What arguments against secession having to do with the physical proximity of the North and South does Lincoln present?

They are right next to each other, it will worsen relations, war will not resolve anything.

6. What is the "proposed amendment to the Constitution" Lincoln mentions? What is his position on it?

It is an amendment that prohibits the United States government ever from interfering with the institution of slavery. Lincoln says he supports it, and has "no objections to its being made express and irrevocable" (permanent).

7. How does Lincoln end the address? How is this tone different from the rest of the speech?

It sounds more friendly (even using religious language), and is less threatening.

Week 19, Day 2: The Lady, or the Tiger?

1. Define *barbaric* and *idealist*. Why is the king described as a *barbaric idealist*?

Barbaric means brutal and inhumane; an idealist is someone who aims for optimistic goals to further humanity. The king is a “barbaric idealist” because he thinks he can use violence to achieve beauty and justice.

2. What is strange about saying that the crowd goes home sad after someone is killed by a tiger because they think the victim “should have merited so dire a fate”? What is inappropriate about choosing the “right door” for some?

Just because the person chose the “tiger door” doesn’t mean he’s guilty, but the crowd seems to think that it must mean that! And sometimes a person already has a wife, but if he chooses the “right door,” he has to marry someone else and leave his family!

3. What does it say about the masses who regularly attend these events, who say that they are “fair” because the accused person “has the whole matter in his own hands”?

It makes them look ridiculous to believe that; the accused persons certainly do not have the matter in their own hands.

4. What does the story suggest about tyranny and free will? What do you think was behind the door to the right?

Answers will vary, but for the first question might include something like “There was really no choice for those accused of crimes; a married man, for example, lost either way he chose.”

Week 19, Day 3: The Bride Comes To Yellow Sky

1. Describe the looks and character of Jack Potter, his bride, and Scratchy Wilson.

Jack Potter is the sheriff of Yellow Sky—dressed up more than normal (and uncomfortable with it), slightly unaware of “high society” behavioral customs, a little awkward around his new bride...and delighted to be married. He is, however, brave, tough, and unflinching—even without his guns—during a confrontation with Scratchy Wilson.

Mrs. Potter is not very young or pretty, possibly right at the cusp of being in danger of becoming an “old maid.” She behaves a little awkwardly and self-consciously on the train ride with her new husband, but is earnest and pleasant, happy to be riding on a train and mostly happy to be married.

Scratchy Wilson is a gentle man, except for when he gets drunk, when he walks around Yellow Sky in a drunken fit, shooting up anything in his way. He has had a run-in with Sheriff Potter, who shot him in the leg. During this particular tear he’s on he is dressed up nicely, although yelling incredibly loudly for someone to challenge him to a gunfight. He is an expert gun handler, twirling them and hitting anything he has a notion to shoot at. He even shoots out all the windows of his best friend!

2. How do the newlyweds behave toward each other on the train? What can the reader deduce from this? How do the other train riders regard the couple?

They are shy and slightly embarrassed, sometimes fumbling with words and acting almost as if they were on a “first date.” It seems probable that they do not know each other very well. The other passengers—and the porters—smile, sometimes a little scornfully, at the couple, realizing that they are newlyweds.

3. Why is Potter nervous about returning to Yellow Sky? What does he decide to do as soon as he arrives?

As sheriff, he worries about what the townspeople will say about his bride, a woman they know nothing about. Potter plans to whisk his bride to his home without anyone seeing them, and then think of a plan to introduce her to the town.

4. What time shift occurs in Part II? What do we learn from this scene in Yellow Sky?

The time flashes back to a scene in a bar about 20 minutes before the train with the Potters arrives in Yellow Sky. A man runs in to announce that Scratchy Wilson is drunk, and the people in the bar hide, run away, and lock and bar the doors.

5. What does Scratchy Wilson decide to do when no one offers to oppose him in a gunfight? How does Part IV bring the two separate plotlines together?

He decides to go to Jack Potter’s house to shoot it out with him. While he is loading one revolver, Jack Potter comes around the corner with his wife, startling Scratchy, who claims that Potter tried to sneak up on him. Potter informs Wilson that he has no gun, Scratchy is stunned, and puts away his guns, walking off while mumbling about Potter’s getting married.

6. How does the amount of gunplay the two main men in the story engage in compare to their strength of character?

Jack Potter, who doesn’t use a gun at all, even though he is the sheriff, comes across as tough and dependable. Scratchy Wilson uses guns like toys and comes across as infantile and silly, embarrassed into leaving with his tail tucked, simply because a woman is present.

7. Why do you think this story is titled “The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky,” instead of another title that gives more prominence to Sheriff Potter or Scratchy Wilson? What does this indicate about this story’s *theme*?

The focus is on the bride, because her simple presence has somewhat “tamed” Scratchy Wilson, and the story’s theme involves how women like Mrs. Potter represented civilization for and helped to “tame” the Old West.

Week 20, Day 1: Lucky People

1. What does Mrs. Jewett mean by saying, “[T]here is nothing we have to work so hard for as this very good luck”? What examples does she give of this?

That “luck” isn’t that important; it’s really evidence of hard work. She gives examples of someone who is kind and is done a favor in return, someone who is wise and sensible, someone who carefully studies, someone who did not yield to the temptation to be lazy.

2. What does Mrs. Jewett say about how most people approach work? How does she react to a young person who says he has great ambitions?

That they avoid it, wanting good things just to happen to them. Jewett asks the person with great ambitions if he is willing to work.

3. What does Mrs. Jewett say is the worst thing to envy a person for?

His goodness.

4. What is the only kind of “bad luck” that Mrs. Jewett believes in? How does she view the hardships of life?

The kind we make for ourselves. She views the hardships of life as God working with us and not against us.

5. How does Mrs. Jewett credit God in each of our lives? How does this relate to the essay’s main point?

She says that God gives all of us talents and opportunities, and that it is up to us to work hard to take advantage of them.

Week 20, Days 2-3: Locked Doors

1. What about the previous nurse gets the story in motion?

She works for a house in which she had a nervous breakdown within four days, and detective Patton wants to know why, so he gets Miss Adams to replace her.

2. How does Miss Adams’s nurse training and personality help her solve mysteries?

She can work as a nurse undercover; she has learned to be decisive and to keep her nerve; she wins the confidence of those around her by helping them; she’s able to work silently (since she’s used to working quietly so patients won’t awaken). Her personality is smart, brisk and decisive, which helps her make decisions and act, especially under pressure.

3. What is in Miss Adams’s “box”?

Skeleton keys, a gun, handcuffs, a flashlight, etc.

4. Describe the basic setup and suspicion surrounding the Reed house.

Doors are locked, food is brought in, mysterious sounds are heard, no one is allowed in or out, there are no rugs, Mr. Reed keeps looking behind his back as if he suspects someone will be there,

5. Explain the meaning of (a) the Frenchwoman locked in a room who says “It’s coming up! I die tomorrow!”, (b) the dead fish and dead dog, (c) the bodyless head, and (d) Mr. Reed’s going pale when he reads in the newspaper of the elderly gentleman’s death.

The Frenchwoman was bitten by a diseased rat, and is talking about her temperature; the fish and dog died from poisons around the house; the bodyless head was Mr. Reed standing under the stairs, his head wrapped up to protect himself, trying to kill rats; Mr. Reed goes pale when he sees Smythe has died, wondering if plague killed him.

6. What is the reason for the strange goings-on at the Reed house?

Mr. Reed was trying to do research to find a cure for a certain plague, for money, since he was in debt; but some of the rats he was using to test his serum escaped, and he locked down the house to prevent their escape until he could catch them.

Week 20, Day 4: Taming the Bicycle

1. What does Twain mean at first by saying he had no problems learning how to dismount? What happens to the Expert when the bicycle lands on him after a few tries?

He fell off a lot at first, and he is hospitalized for several days.

2. What is difficult for Twain about learning to ride the bicycle? What does he compare getting off a bicycle to?

Having to turn the handlebar the opposite way he wants to not fall, figuring out how to mount it, how to steer, how to dismount. He compares dismounting a bicycle to not dismounting a horse, but dismounting a house on fire.

3. Describe Twain's first real "adventure" on the bicycle.

He gives himself plenty of space (30 yards) so he doesn't run into anything; he gets insulted by a young boy; he comes to a stop on a steep uphill incline; he hits stones; he has a hard time turning around; he crashes into a farmer's wagon full of cabbages; he hits dogs accidentally.

Week 21, Day 1: The Fruitful Sleeping of the Rev. Elisha Edwards

1. What is Rev. Elisha Edwards's habit? What explanations, and proof, are given?

He sleeps during church services. Some claim he is in deep meditation; others say he is being disrespectful toward the preacher; some say he is sleeping. Edwards openly and loudly snores during one sermon.

2. What does Edwards think has happened when he sees the congregation looking shocked after he awakes? How does he know something is wrong?

He thinks they've been strongly affected by Uncle Isham Dyer's sermon. He knows something is wrong, because they don't sing with him during the service, the offering collection is small, and no one invites him to dinner after church.

3. What, exactly, is it about Edwards's sleeping that upsets the committee (the complaint voiced by Uncle Isham)? How does Edwards react to Sister Dicey's disclosure to him?

They say they're upset, not at Edwards's sleeping per se, but because they believe he is deceiving them by pretending to meditate. Edwards is shocked at Sister Dicey's news, but thinks about what he can do to undo the damage.

4. Explain how Edwards puts his plan into motion. What is the congregation's reaction? What is ironic now about their initial desire to get rid of Edwards for deceiving them about his sleeping?

Edwards pretends to sleep when Isham Dyer preaches, but then "awakens" with an incredible alertness. He preaches a fiery sermon on the benefits of sleep, invoking the Biblical accounts of Jacob and Lazarus and saying that sleep can sometimes bring heavenly meditation and visions from God. (Jacob sleeps and dream of the ladder ascending to heaven in Genesis 28:10-12. Jesus tells his disciples Lazarus is "sleeping," and the disciples say, "Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well" (John 1:12), misunderstanding that Jesus is informing them that Lazarus is dead. Edwards then "admits" that he has dozed off sometimes, and asks the congregation if he was "sinning," and they shout "No! No!" and other encouragements. Edwards has now regained the approval of the church.

The irony in this is that the congregation first wanted to get rid of Edwards because he deceived them about his sleeping, but now they want to keep him...after he deceives them about sleeping!

5. What are some clues given by the author and occurrences that show that he doesn't necessarily approve of the motives and absolute integrity of Edwards? How could Edwards have been totally honest with the congregation and still relieved their concern?

Edwards takes scriptures out of context both in thought (regarding "let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth") and in word (using the story of Lazarus's needing sleep and applying it to himself). Edwards is also said to have not necessarily prayed about the situation after Sister Dicey discloses the committee's plans, but possibly made his own plans, even walking into the church the next time with the "light of triumph in his eyes." And finally, what Edwards claims in the "If He Sleep, He Shall Do Well" is not true! Edwards was not lost in deep meditation of God; he was just asleep! This doesn't change the fact that he is essentially a good preacher and cares about the church, however, but it does show that he's taking desperate actions to keep his job.

Edwards could have simply explained that on some days he just gets so hot and tired that he drifts off. He could have pointed to his record of service for the congregation to relieve any concerns of the congregation that he wasn't doing his job.

6. Explain the misunderstandings about sleep that link the Biblical account of Lazarus with "The Fruitful Sleeping of Rev. Elisha Edwards." Is Edwards's sleeping "fruitful"?

The disciples misunderstand Jesus when he says Lazarus is asleep (he is dead), and Edwards says that the congregation misreads his (Edwards's) sleeping in church (although he is not altogether truthful, he apparently does need the rest).

Week 21, Day 2: Editha

1. At the story's beginning, Editha is not sure of "whether she could let [George] go," but "could not let him stay." She also remarks, "How glorious!" when she is told about the war. How does William Dean Howells use these thoughts of Editha to establish her character?

Editha is manipulative of George, and acts as if she owns him and should tell him what to do. She also is shallow and clichéd in her "thinking," imagining that war is "glorious"—instead of dealing with the realities of war—even when her fiancé is in a position where he could be sent to die.

2. Editha sees George as "nearly perfect." What in her mind, would make him "perfect"? Why?

Enlisting to fight in the war would make George "perfect." Editha romantically envisions marrying a man who has done something brave to win her love: "She had always supposed that the man who won her would have done something to win her; she did not know what, but something."

3. What does Editha claim about war? About God and war? Give examples. What does George's "pocket Providence" comment mean? How does the Christian view God's sovereignty and character, His intervention in world affairs, and the reasons for wars? (See Psalm 115:3, Psalm 145:17, Psalm 5:4, Job 34:10, Romans 9:14, Ezra 1:1-4, Jeremiah 25:1-9, Hosea 8:1-4, and James 4:1-4.)

Editha has a romantic, simplistic view of war as a lark that men march off to, wearing handsome uniforms, and winning glory for themselves, instead of death, destruction, pain, and the agony and sorrow of the families involved. She also claims that God preordained the war simply because it happened. She says, "But don't you

see...that it wouldn't have come to this if it hadn't been in the order of Providence?" and "God meant it to be war." George is skeptical, saying that he'll try to believe in Editha's "pocket Providence," meaning that God to Editha is a handy device she keeps in her pocket, ready to pull out when she wants to justify something she believes at the moment.

The Bible says that God is sovereign and does what he pleases (Psalm 115:3), but is also holy and righteous (Psalm 145:17), doing no evil and hating wickedness (Psalm 5:4, Job 34:10, Romans 9:14). God also stirs up kings at certain times to do His work (Ezra 1:1-4, Jeremiah 25:1-9), but there are nations like Israel who have "set up kings" not according to God's will (Hosea 8:1-4). The Bible teaches that wars come from the lusts and evil desires of mankind (James 4:1-4).

4. What does Editha's letter say to George? Why does she decide not to send it? Where does it end up?

Her letter tells George that she doesn't want to marry him unless he enlists. She decides that she doesn't want to send it so she can leave him free to make his own decision, just to pacify her own conscience, since she has already pushed him hard to enlist. She gives the letter to George, telling him not to open it until after he returns from the war.

5. How do Editha's mother and George's mother agree on what Editha has done?

They both agree that she has done a despicable thing. Editha's mother says, "Well, I guess you've done a wicked thing, Editha Balcom." Mrs. Gearson, of course, confronts Editha at the story's end.

6. Why do you think Howells included two instances where George is drinking something? What can be inferred from these incidents?

Editha gives George a glass of lemonade at the beginning; he finishes it, but he refuses her glass when she gives it to him. Later, after enlisting, he wants ice-water and gulps glass after glass. This might represent George's inability at first (with the lemonade) to "swallow" Editha's reasons for his need to enlist, and the ice-water he gulps might represent his unrestrained, giddy acceptance of his decision to enlist.

7. What does George ask of Editha to do "If anything happens"? How does this turn out unexpectedly in two significant ways?

George asks Editha to go see his mother and comfort her "if anything happens." Unexpectedly, first, George is killed, and second, Editha's visit to comfort George's mother...doesn't go as planned.

8. Sum up what Mrs. Gearson tells Editha. What is significant about Mrs. Gearson's order to Editha: "Stand round where the light can strike your face"? What does she finally threaten Editha with? Why?

Mrs. Gearson is angry with Editha for claiming she "left [George] free" to decide about enlisting, when Editha pressured him into it to satisfy her own romantic ideals about war and selfishly create a "hero" to marry. Mrs. Gearson says she is glad George died innocently, without shedding the blood of poor foreigners who had no choice but to join the army.

Mrs. Gearson's order to Editha to "Stand round where the light can strike your face" represents her attempt to get Editha to face the truth of what she has done (which does not happen). Her order to Editha to take the black dress off indicates that Mrs. Gearson knows that Editha's "mourning" is not authentic; it's just a show, and she only feels sorry for herself.

9. How does the portrait painter react to Editha's story? What is ironic when Editha says about Mrs. Gearson, "I think she wasn't quite in her right mind"? What is significant about Howells's mentioning the fact that the portrait painter compares Editha's real lips to the ones she has painted?

The painter is horrified (or at least pretends to be horrified) at Mrs. Gearson's actions as Editha tells her. The irony in Editha's statement is that it is actually Editha who is not in her "right mind."

Editha's real lips are compared to her "false" (painted) lips, possibly to demonstrate that Editha's words are one thing, and her thoughts and motives are totally different.

10. Explain the line in the last paragraph: "The mystery that had bewildered her was solved by the word." What is the word?

The painter says that Mrs. Gearson's actions toward Editha were "vulgar" (the word). Editha has chosen to believe that she has done nothing wrong and that Mrs. Gearson was at fault for blaming her for George's death. Editha has learned nothing at all from this incident, and presumably will continue to live in her make-believe world.

Week 22, Day 1: The Lesson

1. How does the speaker contrast with the mockingbird he hears outside his window? What idea does he have?

He is too sad and tired to sing, unlike the mockingbird, but he gets the idea to try to cheer up some other lonely person with a song.

2. What point does the speaker make in the fourth stanza? What happens with his song?

That through sorrow often comes a great song, like a mockingbird which sings in the dark swamp at night. He sings to cheer up a brother/friend; his friend is cheered—but so is the speaker.

3. What is "the lesson"? Compare this to Romans 15:1-3 and Philippians 2:3-4.

To focus not on your own sorrows, but on the sorrows of others, and yours will be lessened, or you will be happier by making others happy.

Romans 15:1-3: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please *his* neighbor for *his* good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."

Philippians 2:3-4: "Let nothing *be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

Richard Cory

1. List several adjectives and phrases that describe Richard Cory.

Gentleman, clean-favored, imperially slim, quietly arrayed, glittered when he walked, rich, admirably schooled in every grace.

2. What do you think the phrase "waited for the light" (line 13) means? How does it contrast with Richard Cory?

Possibly the common people were waiting on their fortunes to turn, seeing as they were so poor that they “went without the meat.” Richard Cory, in contrast, “glitters.”

3. What line especially makes the last line of “Richard Cory” surprising? How are lines 11-12 ironic? What does God’s Word say about trusting in riches? (See Psalm 49:16-17, Mark 10:23-25, and James 5:1-3.)

The previous line that includes “one calm summer night” makes it surprising that Richard Cory commits suicide, because of the violent contrast of the two. The irony in the poem is that the common people wish they could be in Richard Cory’s place.

What God’s Word says about trusting in riches:

“Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him” (Psalm 49:16-17).

“And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:23-25).

“Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days” (James 5:1-3).

Week 22, Day 2: Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

1. Remember the term *iambic pentameter*? Good! Now look up the term *iambic tetrameter* and write the definition in your own words. How does “Stopping by Woods” fit that definition?

Iambic tetrameter contains four “beats” per line, with accents on the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth syllables. “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” contains exactly that.

2. Explain the poem’s rhyme scheme.

The rhyme scheme is AABA, BBCB, CCDC, DDDD.

3. Make a quick list of images that form in your head after reading the poem, or feelings the poem creates.

Answers will vary.

4. Some readers and literary critics believe “Stopping by Woods” is a simple poem; some believe it is deep and complex. What do you think? What deeper meaning(s) could the poem have besides just an account of a man riding by some woods at night?

Answers will vary, but the poet could be contemplating all the things he wants to accomplish in his life, with the word “sleep” meaning his death.

War Is Kind

1. How do the stanzas of “War Is Kind” alternate, and what effect is created? List the “fates” of the soldiers in the first and third stanzas.

They alternate between little speeches to those affected by the deaths of their men—sweethearts, wives, children, and mothers—and stiff, indoctrinating speeches given by commanders to soldiers or about soldiers. The effect created is to make the stiff little military speeches—about “the virtue of the slaughter” and “the excellence of killing”—sound ridiculous. The soldiers in the first and third stanzas die by (a) being shot off a horse, throwing his hands into the air, and (b) being shot or bombed in trenches, gasping for air until he dies.

2. What does Crane mean when he mentions “the unexplained glory flies above them”?

The “unexplained glory” is the flag. Crane means that it is not exactly clear why fighting for, essentially, a piece of cloth, is supposed to be glorious.

3. Why do you think he titled this poem “War Is Kind”?

Because he believes that war...is not kind, for the reasons he gives in the poem.

Week 22, Day 3: Mending Wall

1. Since “Mending Wall” is written in unrhymed iambic pentameter, how can it be poetically classified?

As blank verse!

2. What happens to the speaker’s fence? What does he do with his neighbor in spring?

It constantly gets broken down, by frozen groundswell, hunters, or unseen “hands.” The speaker works together with his neighbor to rebuild the wall in springtime.

3. What does the speaker’s neighbor say twice about fences? What does he mean by this? What doesn’t the speaker understand about his neighbor’s saying this?

The neighbor twice says, “Good fences make good neighbors,” meaning that neighbors respect each other’s property. The speaker doesn’t understand his neighbor’s saying this in their case, because there is nothing on either’s land that could disrupt the other’s property, such as cows.

4. What do you make of the poem’s lines about the neighbor’s being like a “savage armed” and moving “in darkness...not of woods only and the shade of trees”?

The neighbor seems to be acting a little in a primitive, uncivilized way, by just putting up the fence when there is no real reason to do so; this is emphasized by the phrases about his being “in darkness” (or working from a backwards state of mind).

5. How are the ways that the two neighbors approach the mending of the wall opposites?

The speaker has fun with it, and feels playful about it, partly because it is springtime, and he thinks about why he is doing it. The neighbor works on the wall unthinkingly, simply as a ritual that he has always done.

Week 22, Day 4: The Road Not Taken

1. What is the rhyme scheme of “The Road Not Taken”?

ABAAB

2. What does the speaker do before he takes one of the roads? Is there any particular reason he takes the road he does?

He looks as far down the road as he can, until it bends and he can no longer see down it. He says that it is a little less traveled, although he admits that the roads are really about equally traveled upon.

3. The speaker says that by taking the road “less traveled by,” it “has made all the difference.” What two major questions arise from his saying this?

First, how has it made all the difference, since both roads are basically equally worn, as he says earlier in the poem? And second, how does he know that it has made all the difference, since he doesn't know what he missed by not taking the first road?

4. What “lesson” do you think many readers of “The Road Not Taken” pull from the poem?

That people should follow their own dreams or way of doing things, and not just to follow the same path that others take simply because many have taken that path.

Week 23, Day 1: Chapter I

1. Describe Major Amberson’s background, accomplishments, and standing in the town of Midland.

Major Amberson built the town of Midland; he “made a fortune” in 1873. He is the most respected and probably wealthiest citizen in Midland.

2. What kind of town is Midland? What kind of town was it before?

It is a small town where everybody knows everybody. People admire the wealthy, including the Amberson family.

3. List some of the changes and vanishings that the author says that Midland (and Midland’s residents) have undergone over the years. What kind of people populated the town?

Clothing, hairstyles, and home styles have changed over the years. The hired horsemen, stables, woodsheds, mule-drawn street-cars, parties, serenades, and plays have vanished. The people are descendants of hardy, thrifty pioneers who moved west. Their thriftiness contrasts greatly with the magnificence of the Ambersons.

4. Describe Amberson Mansion and the Amberson family in general.

Major Amberson buys 200 acres, then plots and builds streets, Amberson Mansion is a symbol of Amberson magnificence, and the pride of the town. The Ambersons set the cultural tone (eating olives, oil on their salad, drinking tea, keeping Saint Bernard dogs)

Chapter II

1. How does the author confirm the beauty of Isabel Amberson?

He remarks how Mrs. Foster can't keep her eye on the Hazel Kirke play because she's enthralled by Isabel Amberson's beauty.

2. Describe the two men Isabel thinks about marrying, who wins, and why.

Isabel is interested in two men (one with "sparkle," one with "persistence"). The first (with the sparkle) loses her when he steps through a bass viola (apparently drunk) when serenading her. Isabel then gets engaged to the second suitor (Wilbur Minafer).

3. What does Mrs. Foster predict about the Minafer family?

That Wilbur will make a good husband, but he and Isabel will have the worst, spoiled children ever, because she doesn't really love Wilbur, so she will love her children too much. She turns out to be correct, except for the fact that they only have one child.

4. What is George Minafer like? What do the townspeople long to see?

George is spoiled, a smart aleck, handsome, arrogant, dressed like a sissy, and he fascinates and disgusts the townspeople. The fight with the minister's nephew cements George's attitude toward other people, even adults, and his mother's lack of ability to discipline or chastise him. The townspeople long for the day when George gets his "comeuppance."

Week 23, Day 2: Chapter III

1. Describe George's experience at school. How do the teachers and students regard him? What does the author mean when he says George learns "nothing whatever about himself"?

George goes to a private school. His teachers are fascinated by him, but no one likes him because he is rude and pompous. He is smart and does well. He goes to a prep school and is thrown out for "insolence and profanity" toward the principal.

George learns "nothing whatever about himself," meaning that he still doesn't understand that he isn't the center of the universe.

2. What specific incidents in this chapter tell the reader the kind of young man George is growing up to be?

He comes back to town and drives a dog-cart dangerously fast around others, even whipping one of the men who works at a hardware store. FOTA (Friends of the Ace) is a private teenaged boys' club held at the somewhat run-down building of George's grandfather. The boys are eager to follow George since his grandfather owns the club's meeting place, and because of George's natural charisma, which he uses to take over the presidency.

Chapter IV

1. Describe the way George looks at the other people of Midland. How is he both similar to and different from his grandfather?

After his second year of college, George returns and is polite to the townspeople, but in a condescending way that people don't like. He is shown as similar to his grandfather (handsome), but different from him (arrogant instead of persuasive).

2. In what insensitive way does George see (a) his mother, and (b) the man he is introduced to at a party? What is this man like?

George, because of his selfishness and youth, can only view his mother (who is near 40) as a “mother,” not someone with feelings and interests. He is disturbed at her loveliness and gracefulness. He is introduced at the party to a man he calls a “queer-looking duck” by his nieces, and then his mother introduces him too.

3. Give some characteristics of Miss Morgan.

She is friendly, beautiful, self-assured, and polite.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- George’s Great Uncle John embarrasses him with his loudness, brash talking, and refusal to conform to social mores and dress. Of course, this is like George, who also refuses to conform to proper social behavior toward those he considers “inferior.”
- Sydney and Amelia Amberson walk down the stairs as George takes Miss Morgan by. Sydney and Amelia are rich and regal, and George is proud of them. The couple represent the rich, noble Amberson family.

Week 23, Day 3: Chapter V

1. Describe Wilbur Minafer’s looks and personality. Why do you think George doesn’t introduce him to Miss Morgan?

Wilbur Minafer is plain-looking and undistinguished, and George doesn’t even bother to introduce him to Miss Morgan (probably because he’s not “an Amberson,” and not worth George’s time).

2. What is your take on how George treats Miss Morgan?

George and Miss Morgan dance, and George is strongly affected by her. When other young men try to dance, he becomes irritated and demanding, taking her away to talk with him alone (selfishly, like a toy he wants to keep from others).

3. Who is Fanny? What irritates George about how the “queer-looking duck” behaves toward his (George’s) family? Explain the humor in George’s being waved at.

George and Miss Morgan see the “queer-looking duck” dance with Fanny, George’s 40-year-old aunt, who sometimes can look much younger or older than she is. He is a great dancer, but George is irritated that he seems too familiar with and not respectful enough of their aristocratic family, especially when the “duck” waves to them. The “duck,” Miss Morgan informs George, wasn’t waving at HIM—he was waving at HER, because it’s her father!

4. Sum up the conversation George and Lucy Morgan have about what he is studying at college.

Lucy asks what he’s studying at college—to learn a business or trade? George dismisses this, since he simply plans to be a gentleman and not have to work.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- Wilbur Minafer says goodnight to George, who barely answers (just like he barely answers people beneath him he’s introduced to at the party).

Chapter VI

1. How does George insult the “queer-looking duck” in front of Lucy? What does this show about his character? How is he surprised?

George sees the “queer-looking duck” dancing with his mother and comments to Lucy. Lucy says that the “duck” gave her the flower she has; George acts jealous, calling him “an old widower.” Lucy says that he is indeed, and that he’s her father, embarrassing George.

2. What does Lucy tell George about her family? What does George say about her father’s invention? How does Lucy take George’s “compliment” of her father?

George backs off and underhandedly compliments Lucy’s father, and Lucy comments that that’s how arrogant people speak. She tells George that her father used to live here, but they moved, and he’s invented a horseless carriage, which George says won’t ever amount to anything (!).

3. What does George learn about Mr. Morgan from his Uncle George? Sum up the conversation between Eugene Morgan and Fred Kinney. How many times has Isabel been wrong, according to Fred?

George talks to his uncle George about Eugene Morgan, who Uncle says, used to be quite popular with young ladies, including young George’s aunt Fanny, and....

Eugene Morgan runs into Fred Kinney, and he remarks mysteriously to Fred how his life changed drastically about 20 years before. Fred nods, understanding (the reader doesn’t), and says his son Fred refused to come to George’s party (because of being unseated as President of the boys’ club). He also criticizes how Isabel “worships” her son George, which makes Eugene think deeply.

Eugene says that Isabel is “right” to love George, and that she’s never wrong. Fred remarks that “She was wrong once.”

Additional Chapter Notes:

- George reveals his arrogance and superiority with his conversation to Lucy Morgan. He dismisses her father and his “horseless carriage” invention as worthless.

Week 24, Day 1: Chapter VII

1. How has George’s driving not changed since he was a boy? Explain how Major Amberson’s horse and carriage compare to Eugene Morgan’s automobile. What is happening to the Major’s buildings and statues, as well as his horse and carriage?

George still drives recklessly, not caring very much for those who “get in his way.” Major Amberson’s horse are faster than Eugene Morgan’s automobile, going 20 miles per hour at top speed as opposed to about 12 miles per hour for the automobile. The Major’s horse and carriage, as well as his properties, are getting older and worn.

2. In what way does George accuse Lucy of acting toward him? How is this ironic?

He accuses her of acting “superior,” when he himself is as arrogant as they come!

3. What are Eugene Morgan’s memories of Midland, as Lucy tells George?

He says it was nicer, gentler, and more lovely, with sunshine and good air all the time.

4. Discuss the incident with the automobile and George's horses.

They almost run each other over, and George's cutter falls into a ditch.

Week 24, Day 2: Chapter VIII

1. How does George's mother annoy him? Why do you think he feels this way?

After the accident, George is dismayed to see his mother so happy talking to Eugene and his using her first name. He's probably jealous, or just doesn't think Eugene is good enough for their family to associate with on such friendly terms.

2. What does George believe Eugene Morgan is trying to do by cozying up to his family? How does his (George's) father react?

He says he believes Eugene Morgan is trying to cozy up to the Amberson family to get money for investing in his automobile. His father disagrees. George asks Fanny why Eugene Morgan is getting everyone so excited, and Fanny reproaches him, accusing George of making a fuss because he thinks Fanny is interested in marrying Mr. Morgan.

3. How are Eugene Morgan and George similar in how their personalities affect those around them?

They both attract attention and get people excited and sometimes upset.

4. What does George realize for the first time about Fanny?

He realizes for the first time in his life that Fanny is a passionate human with feelings and desires (he's apparently been too selfish to notice before).

Chapter IX

1. Describe George's treatment of Lucy at the dance. Why does he do this? What does his Uncle George do that George considers almost unforgivable?

George pretends to ignore Lucy, but secretly watches her and constantly hears her voice above all the others. Uncle George has paired up Fred Kinney with Lucy Morgan in a dance, which George considers unforgivable.

2. How does Lucy treat George at the dance? Why do you think this is? (Think back to their accident in the horse and carriage.)

Lucy offers George a dance, and George pretends not to be interested. Lucy pursues George for many dances, implying that she does so because he told her he liked her on their horse carriage ride. She probably is impressed that he attempted to save her from injury during the accident.

3. Sum up the conversation that Fanny and Isabel have as they watch Lucy and George dance. What other couple does Fanny closely watch? Why?

Fanny and Isabel watch the young couple; Isabel fawns over George, but Fanny is not impressed, telling Isabel that George's personality is not as amiable as Isabel thinks. Fanny closely watches Isabel as she dances with Eugene Morgan. She seems to be taken with Eugene Morgan.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- It's amazing how much goes on at a dance (an event that is supposed to be socially uplifting for a community) in the way of bickering, plotting, and gossip. Things haven't changed much in 100 years!

Week 24, Day 3: Chapter X

1. Why does Fanny send George the news clipping? What is he more interested in reading, and why? Which sentence does he read several times, and why?

Fanny sends George a newspaper clipping about spoiled young people. The writer offers his opinion that young men are too arrogant, condescending, spoiled, and rude, and that this does not bode well for America's future, especially when the young women and older people are captivated by this behavior. George disdains the clipping, but reads the letter with interest, in which Fanny says that Isabel gave Mr. Morgan a big party, that Mr. Morgan has moved to their town, that he is beginning an automobile plant, and that George's father is not in good health.

The sentence George reads several times is the one about Lucy's remarking that an actor she saw looked like George, but more "democratic in his manner," which annoys George.

2. Sum up George's letter to Lucy. How is his complaint to her undercut by his explanation to her?

George writes Lucy, telling her he doesn't understand her comment about his not being "democratic," when he explained to her his theory of life (basically that only a few people matter, and that he doesn't bother with most people because they are "shallow"). This is not exactly the type of thing to say to prove you are even-handed in your treatment of your fellow man.

3. Explain the conflicts that George has with two different persons regarding the Amberson Hotel. What does Eugene Morgan tell Lucy about "arrogant, domineering people"? Is this in your experience true?

First, George argues with his grandfather about the need to renovate the Amberson Hotel, but his grandfather argues back and locks George out of his office. Second, George visits the Morgans, and is angry at Fred Kinney when Fred pokes fun at the bad shape of the Amberson Hotel. When George stomps out, Eugene Morgan laughs uncontrollably, since it reminds him of what he and his friends used to do.

Mr. Morgan remarks to Lucy that "Arrogant and domineering people can't stand the least, lightest, faintest breath of criticism. It just kills them."

4. What do Lucy and Eugene Morgan discuss about Isabel Minafer? What does Fanny tell Lucy about Isabel and George, and about Wilbur Minafer?

Lucy asks her father how Isabel came to marry Mr. Minafer, and Eugene defends Minafer. Lucy says that Fanny told her that everything Isabel and George have to spend on their own comes from Major Amberson, that Minafer doesn't like to spend money—just save and invest it.

Chapter XI

1. What does Lucy learn from Major Amberson? How does this news strike George?

One night Major Amberson reveals to Lucy that it was her father, Eugene Morgan, who stepped through the bass fiddle while drunkenly serenading Isabel, and that Isabel soon married Wilbur Minafer afterwards. He

says Eugene never touched alcohol once afterwards. George is appalled, and argues with Aunt Fanny about what he believes is her throwing herself at Eugene.

2. How does Eugene Morgan both regret *and* rejoice because of his misfortune years earlier?

Eugene says he missed a golden opportunity to marry the beautiful and personable Isabel Amberson, but he is thankful it happened, because he'd never have had Lucy.

3. Sum up what Isabel tells George in their conversation about (a) his happiness, and (b) Wilbur Minafer?

George talks with his mother, and she wants to know if he's happy, telling him these happy, carefree days of youth end quickly. She sheds a tear, telling George that she is worried about Wilbur, who seems to be in worse health and worried about investments.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- The difference between George and Eugene is shown when Eugene delivers “a word fitly spoken” (Proverbs 25:11) about his regret in marrying Isabel. This contrasts markedly with George’s constant rudeness and arrogance, criticizing others around him for their supposed lack of suitability and competence.

Week 24, Day 4: Chapter XII

1. Why does Wilbur Minafer seem to be in such bad health? How does George react to this serious news about his father?

Minafer’s health is getting worse, and the doctor says he should get away from work. George shows very little concern about his father, asking about Lucy instead.

2. Where have the Morgans moved? How is Eugene Morgan’s automobile business doing? What does this contrast with?

The Morgans have moved to a house close to the green and gray house George and Lucy drove past and George mocked. Eugene’s automobile business is booming, which contrasts with the rumors of what is happening with the Amberson fortune.

3. What shocking news does Fanny tell George? What does Lucy say when George confronts her about it?

Fanny tells George that Lucy is engaged to Fred Kinney; George is shocked. George confronts Lucy at her house and demands the truth. Lucy says she is not engaged to Fred, but refuses to be engaged to George. She claims it is because she is older than he, but refuses to comment when he asks if that’s the only reason. George asks her to settle things the night before he leaves.

4. Why do you think that Lucy does not agree to be engaged to George?

Probably because, although she likes him, she does not approve of the way he treats people or his view that he is going to be a “gentleman,” instead of working and producing something.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- The success that Eugene Morgan is having with his automobile business is significant in two areas. First, it provides a strong contrast between Wilbur Minafer’s apparently poor business decisions, which are shaky enough to have badly affected his health. Second, because they demonstrate how wrong George was about Morgan’s horseless carriage invention being a waste of time.

- George’s lack of concern toward his father’s health is disappointing, but not unexpected. He seems more interested in Lucy’s whereabouts than his father’s declining health (apparently because he doesn’t see any benefits to his own personal life provided by his father, like Lucy).

Chapter XIII

1. What does George tease Fanny about?

He teases Fanny about a rumor that Eugene Morgan is engaged to a young girl, which upsets Fanny greatly.

2. Explain Isabel’s news about Sydney and Amelia. What is Uncle George’s reaction to their request? How does (the younger) George see the situation?

Isabel tells George that Amelia and Sydney have requested their inheritance (1/3) now, since Sydney did not get the diplomatic position he desired. Uncle George says the family fortune won’t stand for this, and Sydney and Amelia won’t speak to Isabel or him.

George imagines himself a wealthy man inheriting their Florence, Italy home someday, and is not worried, but thinks it over and decides to talk to his grandfather about it. He decides not to interrupt his grandfather, who is trying to calm an argument between Uncle George and Sydney.

3. What does Amelia accuse Isabel of doing? How does this sit with George? How does Uncle George explain it to young George?

George hears Amelia accusing his mother of siding with Uncle George simply because Uncle George is friends with Eugene Morgan, and that Isabel is pretending to chaperone Fanny for Eugene when it is Isabel who wants to be with Eugene.

George confronts his Uncle George to ask if this is true, and Uncle George laughs in disgust, saying Isabel is on his side because Amelia and Sydney are “pigs” and are trying to swindle him and Isabel. Uncle George says Fanny is going after Eugene and that George shouldn’t tease her at all about it. He says Fanny keeps Isabel around to make sure Eugene sees her a lot.

4. Sum up George’s conversation with Fanny about the situation. What does he decide the family should do?

He confronts Aunt Fanny, asking if the rumors are true. When Fanny denies it, he suggests they all stop seeing the Morgans for a while, to stop the rumors. Fanny cries, accusing George of hating her and wanting to see her unhappy. George feels bad and decides that the rumors aren’t true.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- George is worried about rumors again. (His first worry dealt with the rumor that Lucy was going to marry Fred Kinney.) Before he didn’t care what anyone thought, so this demonstrates a change in thinking with George, which mirrors the changes coming to the Ambersons.
- The great green lawn George looks out on is the only large lot left; the others have been divided up into what he thinks are small, ugly homes. This is another visual representation of the slowly changing fortune of the Amberson family.

Week 25, Day 1: Chapter XIV

1. What does Lucy say to George in her letter?

Lucy writes George, “almost” accepting his proposal, but saying she is taking the idea seriously, and that George might even forget her one day, seeing her obituary when he’s an old man and trying to remember who she was.

2. Where are George’s parents? Why?

His parents are in Asheville. Isabel says they had to almost force Wilbur to go on vacation for his health.

3. Describe how George reacts at first when he gets the news that his father has died. How does this differ from how he reacts at the funeral?

George receives a telegram telling him his father has died. He feels bad that he doesn’t feel as grieved as others think he does. He weeps at the funeral, aware that his father was there for him.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- This chapter contains ominous signs for the Ambersons’ future greatness and influence, including (a) the old age, feebleness, and death of Major Amberson; and (b) the Amberson monument, which has been overshadowed by other newer, nicer gravestones.
- George grows up in this chapter. Although he still looks down on others for not being established, rich families, he begins to regard the feelings of others like Aunt Fanny (even writing his mother to tell Fanny they will take care of her), and he also begins to appreciate what his father did for him during his life.

Chapter XV

1. What has happened to Uncle George and Fanny? Whose fault is it? Does this fact make clearer any earlier events?

George Amberson and Fanny are bankrupted by Wilbur’s business decisions. Fanny has \$900 per year in insurance, but will not cheer up, despite George’s efforts. Isabel and George take a two-week vacation, and she is proud to be with him.

2. Describe George’s college graduation day. What three things does Eugene say explain both the good and the bad about George?

Uncle George, Isabel, Lucy, and Eugene visit George on his graduation from college. Eugene and Uncle George talk about young George, and Eugene says all that’s good and bad about the young man can be explained in three things: he’s Isabel’s only child, he’s an Amberson, and he’s a boy.

3. What does the remark that it takes some time for the Ambersons to “come to be people” mean?

As Eugene and Uncle George watch George with Lucy, they remark on his superior attitude, saying that it takes time—and more than just time—for Ambersons to “come to be people.” This refers to their arrogance, and their difficulty in looking at others as equals, and treating others with love and respect as fellow human beings.

4. What has George actually learned in college? What does one of his college classmates mean when he tells Lucy, “Really, don’t you think that *being* things is rather better than *doing* things?”

George has apparently not learned how to DO anything in college other than pass tests. What George’s college classmate means by “being” and not “doing” is that he and his “type” are inherently superior to others, and don’t have to do anything.

5. When George tells Lucy he's going to be a "gentleman," the author says, "Lucy gave the horizon a long look, but offered no comment." Explain the double meaning of this statement.

Lucy looks away from George, and toward the horizon, to avoid his eyes. This is also a way of suggesting that she is looking at the future, and not happy about her prospects with George, since their ideas on "doing" and "being" are so different.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- The "doing" vs. "being" contrast is significant in *The Magnificent Ambersons*. The "being" notion is more of an "Old World" ideal common to royal or noble families, while the "doing" is a "pick-yourself-by-your-bootstraps" American ideal of self-reliance. Eugene Morgan is an example of someone who "does," and George an example of someone who "is." The author's sympathies are apparent, as Eugene's character is much more sympathetic than George's. The fortunes of the two families are also taking drastic turns, with the Morgans moving up the ladder of success, and the Ambersons sliding down.

Week 25, Day 2: Chapter XVI

1. What things do George and Fanny talk about? Why is Fanny surprised when George says that Eugene has been with them? What comment does George make that upsets her?

George and Isabel arrive home. George thinks Fanny looks tired and old, and Isabel says it will take time for Fanny to recover. George and Fanny converse, alone, in the kitchen. Fanny is shocked when George says Eugene has been with them, and says it is odd that Isabel didn't mention that Eugene was there. George tells Fanny Eugene is doing well, and calls him "YOUNG FELLOW"! This is a departure from George's view of "older" people. George teases Fanny about the possibility of Eugene's asking her to marry him, and she bursts into tears.

2. What are the strange noises and shapes that George sees across the street at his grandfather's house? Why is this occurring, according to Uncle George?

George goes to bed and sees shapes and forms across the street at his grandfather's house, thinking that men are working to fix pipes, and decides to check back in the morning. The next morning he discovers that five new houses are being built and runs across, upset. Uncle George tells him that the Major has to do this for money, and that the Major has already sold off some items for money.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- The "foundations" of the new houses being built might represent the upheaval that is occurring in Midland, both with the town's reshaping and modernization, and with the changing role of the Ambersons.

Chapter XVII

1. Why does Major Amberson sidestep George's request for a horse? What suggestion does Isabel have? How does George react to her suggestion?

George asks his grandfather for money and a horse so he can gain skill in driving. The Major doesn't have the money, and gently hints to George, asking him to come back in the fall if he's still interested, and he'll try to make it happen.

Isabel asks George if he would like to drive one of Eugene's cars instead. George says no, stating he's too much of a gentleman to get dirty working on cars.

2. How do George, Fanny, and Isabel all react differently to their visit to Eugene's automobile plant? Why do Fanny and Isabel react the way they do?

George goes with Isabel, Fanny, and Uncle George to Eugene's plant, bored along with his Uncle, while Isabel is fascinated and Fanny bleak. George notices how happy his mother is, which he attributes to the restaurant Eugene takes them to, but Fanny makes a cryptic remark. Isabel says it's because she enjoys seeing the mechanics of the factory, but the real reason is probably because she enjoys being with Eugene.

3. Sum up George and Lucy's conversation about their possible marriage. What is Lucy's objection to George? What angers George about her objection?

They leave, and in his car, Eugene passes and leaves behind George and Lucy in their horse carriage. George tries to talk to Lucy about marriage, but she becomes sad, and asks George what he's going to do for a living. He says he's not going to work, but to be a gentleman, which doesn't satisfy Lucy. This angers George because he thinks Mr. Morgan is leading Lucy to disagree with George's lifestyle, though Lucy denies it.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- George calls his grandfather "queer" in a conversation with his mother; this is the same term he used for Eugene Morgan, when George mistakenly assessed Eugene's identity, his character, and his possibilities for success with the "horseless carriage." Translation: George is probably mistaken in his assessment as to what is going on with the Major, the Amberson family, and the (his) fortune.

Week 25, Day 3: Chapter XVIII

1. What has changed around the Minafer/Amberson homes?

The view of the Minafer/Amberson family has changed. The terrace doesn't open toward just the Major's house anymore, but several new houses. The sounds have changed, with many more automobiles going by (which spells success for Eugene).

2. What does Fanny and Isabel's conversation about Eugene reveal?

Fanny doesn't like when Isabel refers to the summer as "dying," so soon (actually almost a year) after Wilbur has died. There is some awkward conversation about Eugene between Isabel and Fanny, with Isabel apparently unaware that Fanny's emotions are strained, thinking that Isabel has designs on Eugene.

3. What two scenarios does George imagine that involve Lucy?

He imagines a conversation with Lucy in which Lucy begs his forgiveness and throws her father over for him. Then he imagines Lucy surrounded with beaux, whom he calls "riffraff."

4. How do we know that Lucy, home with her father, is troubled?

She loses while playing chess with her father, which usually doesn't happen.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- The physical view of the Minafer/Amberson homes represents the new "outlook" that the Ambersons face in Midland, with their declining fortune and the town passing them by. The same two homes that were highly praised at the novel's beginning are decaying, and looking even worse with the newer structures going up around them.

- In contrast to the Ambersons' falling, the sounds on main street by the Amberson homes—automobiles increasingly being heard—are indicators of Eugene Morgan's success and rise.

Week 25, Day 4: Chapter XIX

1. What does Lucy do that upsets George?

She avoids him.

2. Describe the conversation about automobiles between Major Amberson and Eugene. What is George's "contribution" to the conversation? How does Eugene handle his comment?

The Major quizzes Eugene about cars, saying that they'll be too many soon, but Eugene replies they'll just increase the number of roads to compensate. George interrupts, saying rudely that automobiles are a nuisance, and had no reason to be invented. Eugene graciously says George might be right.

3. Is George's comment surprising, or is it typical of George's character? Can you think of two main reasons why he despises automobiles?

(Answers will vary, but it is typical in some ways, but surprising in its total lack of propriety, especially around adults.) There are two main reasons for George's hatred of automobiles. First, they represent change, and George wants to hang on to the old Amberson name and prestige, rather than make way for someone who "does" things instead of simply "is" someone. Also, Eugene Morgan himself is connected with automobiles, and George dislikes him because he loves his mother, and George doesn't think Eugene is good enough for her.

4. How do Isabel, Fanny, and the Major react to George's statement to Eugene? Why do you think each one reacts in that particular way?

The Major chides George, but his mother says nothing, and Fanny congratulates him secretly after the others have left, saying it was the right thing to do. The Major is simply correcting lack of manners, Isabel wimps out of correcting her son, and Fanny feels anger toward Eugene since he doesn't reciprocate her romantic feelings.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- Eugene again graciously speaks in an awkward part of a conversation (like he did earlier in the novel when he says he is thankful he didn't marry Isabel, because he wouldn't have Lucy). This is an obvious contrast with George, who is uncouth and rude with his speech.
- Automobiles, Eugene says, will make both outward and inward changes in society. This is similar to what has happened to George's family fortune and way of thinking ("being" instead of "doing").
- It's amazing that George calls Eugene's automobiles a nuisance around town, since George himself was such a nuisance driving around his horse and buggy, almost running people over and cracking a whip at adults as well!

Chapter XX

1. How does George answer his mother when she asks him why he doesn't like Eugene?

George says he doesn't care for anyone whose ideals and lifestyle he despises. He assures Isabel he won't bother Eugene again, but Isabel seems especially distressed, and George rudely shuts her up and sends her out.

2. Why is Fanny constantly keeping her eye on George? What does George think she means by her answer?

Fanny scrutinizes George often in a way that makes him uncomfortable, until he protests, upon which Fanny tells him she's waiting to see when he will see what's going on around him (he doesn't understand what). George thinks she means Lucy's absence, when Fanny actually means that Isabel loves Eugene Morgan.

3. How are George's relations with Eugene and Lucy? How is this demonstrated at Lucy's homecoming party? How does George's driving come into question once again?

Eugene comes over often, seeing Isabel and Fanny; George avoids him. At Lucy's homecoming George acts awkwardly, embarrassing himself and infuriating himself against Lucy. He drives home, almost killing Fanny and another lady. He sees his mother and Eugene together talking seriously, and is so angry that he stomps off and disregards their greeting to him.

4. How does George again behave like a hypocrite in this chapter?

George is angered by others' not regarding his feelings, but he cares so little for others he almost wished he had run over Fanny!

Week 26, Day 1: Chapter XXI

1. Sum up what Fanny tells George. How does he react to her revelations?

Fanny tells George she saw him turn away from his mother and Eugene, and that he "did right." She then informs George that people are "talking" about his mother and Eugene, that Isabel never loved anyone but Eugene, and that the two were engaged.

George is shocked. He wants to know who is gossiping, then remembers Mrs. Johnson was talking to Fanny and gets her to admit she was gossiping about them.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- Fanny tells George her piece out of jealousy. George seems shocked, but this seems a little strange, since George is not stupid. It might, however, result from the fact that George is often out of tune with the feelings of others, concentrating so much on his own.

Chapter XXII

1. What does George see as he marches out to confront Mrs. Johnson?

George goes out and sees the cracked, decaying, dry fountain with a statue of Neptune in front of Major Amberson's square.

2. What happens in the conversation between George and Mrs. Johnson? How does Uncle George respond to George when he tells his uncle that he has gone to see her?

He marches to Mrs. Johnson's house and demands what she has been telling of his mother. Mrs. Johnson turns him out, George goes to his uncle's room, and Uncle George says, "Now you've done it!"

Additional Chapter Notes:

- The cracked, decaying statue of Neptune represents the decay of the Ambersons. George marches right

past it, not focused on his own family's true problems, but right over to Mrs. Johnson's house. (It's easy for George to pretend that his family's issues are the fault of other, "less worthy" families.)

Week 26, Day 2: Chapter XXIII

1. What is George's explanation about gossip, and about how George erred?

Uncle George tells George he goofed by confronting a gossip: "Submit to gossip and you kill it; fight it and you make it strong. People will forget almost any slander except one that's been fought." Uncle George tells George it would be a mistake to keep confronting people about the "gossip."

2. What does Uncle George say about Eugene and Isabel?

That Eugene and Isabel should marry if they want to. George is shocked at this, and leaves the house.

3. How is George's reaction (exemplified by the chapter's last line) typical?

George wanders for an hour, thinking, and returns home, barely saying "good night" to his mother. He stays awake thinking. Typical George: When daylight comes, his thought is "This can't be happening to ME!"

Chapter XXIV

1. What two things does George do, using his late father's picture? What does this say about his (George's) character?

George pities himself by looking at a picture of his father until he weeps, saying, "Poor father! It's better you didn't know." He pays to have a photo of his father decorated and puts it on the table Isabel and Fanny sit at often.

2. How does Eugene's appearance contrast with the appearance of the Ambersons' properties and homes?

Eugene comes by for Isabel in his car, looking like a millionaire. This contrasts with the Ambersons, who are looking less and less rich.

3. What drastic action does George take? Name several reasons why he does.

George rudely tells Eugene at the door that he is never welcome there again, and Eugene walks away. Isabel waits a long time by the door for Eugene, while George smugly sits there watching her.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- George puts the picture of his late father so Isabel can see it, and—he hopes—forget about Eugene.
- Isabel Morgan looks very weak in this chapter. Even though she has babied George her whole life, it seems unlikely that she doesn't realize that George doesn't like her going around with Eugene Morgan.
- George's slamming the door in Eugene Morgan's face recalls Isabel's rather unfair rejection of Eugene 20 years earlier.

Week 26, Day 3: Chapter XXV

1. Give some examples that show that George is completely out of control, based on the way he has recently treated (a) Mrs. Johnson, (b) Eugene Morgan, and (c) Fanny.

George has (a) rudely confronted Mrs. Johnson, (b) rudely told Eugene Morgan never to come back, and (c) rudely tries to push past Fanny and interject himself into a conversation between George and Isabel.

These contrast with George's opinion of himself, because he sees himself as cultured, refined, worthy of respect for being "an Amberson."

2. For what two major reasons does Fanny tell George he should leave his mother alone?

Fanny admits she shouldn't have egged on George, and that Eugene never was interested in her. She also tells George to leave Isabel alone, because she suspects Isabel isn't well, with heart trouble, since she sees the doctor often. George is struck by the sight of a stained glass window above himself and Fanny with three figures that represent love and purity and beauty. George bitterly sits down to think, but doesn't disturb his mother. Isabel comes behind him and says, "You mustn't be troubled, darling."

Chapter XXVI

1. Describe George's reaction when Isabel gives him Eugene's letter. Do you think it was wise of her to do that? If not, why do you think she did it?

Isabel tells George she hates to see him upset and hands him a letter from Eugene, which says he understands that George doesn't like him, but asks Isabel if she will live her life her way or George's way, and that she must defeat George's will, and not "strike down my life twice." George is furious with the letter.

2. Why does Isabel think George is angry? What is the irony in his telling his mother he is trying to protect her good name?

Isabel thinks he opposes Eugene because if he and Lucy get married it would be awkward marrying his stepsister, which is not true. The irony is George's telling Isabel he's trying to protect her good name is that George himself has been the cause of much reproach to the name "Amberson" in the town himself, by his words and actions toward others.

3. How does Isabel think that marrying Eugene would be (a) unfair to George, and (b) unfair to Eugene?

Isabel wonders if it would be fair to George, to upset him by marrying Eugene Morgan, and fair to Eugene himself, given her family's heart trouble, to allow him to marry her when she might have heart trouble and die young.

4. What does Isabel's note to George say? Is this the sign of a healthy or unhealthy relationship between mother and son?

George falls asleep heavily, and awakens with a note pinned on him from Isabel that says she won't marry Eugene because she can't bear to see George suffer (which she apologizes for). This is very odd, almost twisted actions of a mother toward her son, treating him as if he were a young boy whose feelings might get hurt if she took away his toy or something similar.

5. Earlier in *The Magnificent Ambersons*, George cares little for the opinions of others, but at this point in his life, he's almost obsessed with what others think and say about his family. What do you think is responsible for this change in outlook?

Now that he realizes they're getting poor, he cares too much about what others say about his family. Before his family's wealth could "cover" any criticisms he heard, and he thought so poorly of anyone else's opinions that he didn't care what they said. It's probably true that it bothers George that Eugene is now rich.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- George tells Isabel he's through with Lucy because she acted rude and "superior" toward him. This is not actually true, but even if it were, George is exactly what he accuses Lucy of being! Somehow it's acceptable for George to behave this way, but not for the nouveau rich!

Week 27, Day 1: Chapter XXVII

1. What are Lucy's strengths—and one weakness—as described at the beginning of this chapter? How does this compare with George's character?

Lucy is described as a confident, secure, independent, self-reliant young lady, and more than just a beauty—but she loves George (her weakness). This contrasts with George, who has nothing but a "name" and "money."

2. How does George react when he sees Lucy on the street? What is her response to him? What does this tell George?

George sees Lucy and gets flustered as to what to do; he wants to be high-classed, but not insulted. Lucy greets him warmly, and George realizes she must not have heard what he said to Eugene.

3. Why does George scold Lucy? What is her response to him? What makes George so angry when he tells Lucy he and his mother are going away on a trip, possibly never to return?

George chides Lucy for not writing, but she says there was no point, since they are so different they would never get married. He tells her this is the last time he'll see her, since he and his mother are going on a long trip. Lucy seems cheerful and totally unaffected, which angers and upsets George. After he leaves, Lucy goes to the drugstore, not feeling well, and faints.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- Lucy's description as confident, secure, independent, and self-reliant seems on the surface to be like George, but it isn't—George's security depends upon the efforts of others (his family name, his family's wealth), and is an illusion. George is not truly independent, because he relies on these things too much.

Chapter XXVIII

1. What does Lucy burn? Why? What commendable act of George's does she still remember? How does her taking care of her father compare with George's "taking care" of his mother?

Lucy throws a number of photos and letters into the fire after hearing Fanny describe what George did to Eugene and lament that fact that Isabel has raised him to be so horrible. Lucy expresses her anger to Eugene, who agrees that George is horrible. But she thinks of George, and the time he tried to keep her from getting hurt in the cutter accident.

Lucy keeps her father upbeat and happy by dragging him to parties and dances, truly concerned for his happiness. This contrasts with George's selfishly "taking care" of his mother.

2. Describe the changes Midland is undergoing. How many years go by?

The town is growing greatly, not always in pretty ways. The older people are dying off, and newer ones taking their place, of different nationalities. People are generally optimistic and hardworking, vocal and desirous

of progress and more factories. They build, but the buildings are dirty and not under control, and the people are too devoted to “prosperity,” and not enough to God.

The town gets dirtier, affecting Amberson Addition, which is run-down and shabby, along with the other nearby houses. The houses Major Amberson built go unrented, and he loses money. George and Isabel have been gone for three years.

3. What do Uncle George and Fanny decide to invest in? What is Eugene Morgan’s advice about this idea?

Uncle George and Fanny discuss their money troubles and consider investing in electric lights for cars. Eugene cautions them about jumping in too quickly, but the two go all in.

4. What disturbing news about Isabel does Uncle George tell Eugene? Why are he and Lucy upset with George?

Uncle George visits Isabel and George, saying that Isabel wants to come home if her heart can stand the trip. They visit the Morgans’ new home, and Uncle George jokes with Lucy about refusing Fred Kinney’s repeated proposals. He tells Eugene that Isabel’s heart needs rest at home, which worries Eugene, especially when it seems George won’t let her come back. Lucy agrees.

Week 27, Day 2: Chapter XXIX

1. Sum up Isabel’s condition and what happens upon her return.

Isabel’s heart gets so bad that George has to let her return. She arrives home, and the Major tries to see her, looking very old and stooped. George apologizes for waiting so long to return, and Eugene comes to see Isabel. George refuses. Isabel asks to see Eugene, but dies that night before she can.

2. What do you think of George’s decision not to let Eugene see his mother?

It is a selfish, bitter act designed to hurt Eugene Morgan.

3. How is it significant that Isabel has “heart trouble”? In what two major ways in her life has something been “wrong with her heart” (besides the actual medical condition that she dies from)?

Isabel’s life has been negatively affected because of her “heart.” Her heart has longed for Eugene since her husband’s death, and her heart for her son has shown a love for him that in many respects is improper and has resulted in George’s insufferable temperament.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- George’s not letting Eugene Morgan see Isabel is almost, humanly speaking, unforgivable—unlike the minor annoyance that George considered “unforgivable” earlier in the story, when his Uncle George merely pairs up Lucy Morgan with Fred Kinney at a social dance. It’s clear that George still looks at his own actions as unassailable, simply because of who he is, and regardless of the effects upon others.

Chapter XXX

1. How does Fanny answer George when he defends the way he has “protected” his mother? What does this say about the Amberson family? What good point does George make about who is to blame?

George defends to Fanny his decision to take his mother away. Fanny doesn’t agree totally, because instead of being all concerned about the Ambersons, the town has moved on to new things and couldn’t care less

about gossiping about Isabel. George admits Isabel asked to see Eugene, and says that Fanny and Uncle George were wrong not to stand up to him. He is right about that! They are partly to blame. George runs to his room, upset, and Fanny knows they were all wrong to bar Eugene from seeing Isabel.

2. Explain the situation with the electric automobile light investment.

Fanny thinks it's risky to have invested with Uncle George, because of his bad luck. The light turns out to be a shaky proposition, since it needs great speed to work on the car.

3. Sum up the situation of the deed to the house. What does this show about the decision-making abilities of the Major, Uncle George, and young George?

Uncle George also tries to settle Isabel's estate, but can't find the deed to her house. George tells him to forget it, but Uncle George asks the Major for it, but waits so long that the Major can't think coherently any more. The Major dies shortly afterwards. This reflects poorly on their decision-making capabilities.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- The deed situation and automobile light investment situation reflect the increasingly incoherent mess that the Ambersons have become. The town is literally and figuratively passing them by.

Chapter XXXI

1. How have things turned so drastically for the Ambersons, compared to the story's beginning? (Include how George is treated by other young people as he walks the streets.) Sum up Uncle George's conversation with George.

The Amberson estate is broke. George has nothing. Uncle George takes a position, and George gets \$600, plus \$8 per week working as a clerk. A car full of young people goes by George, and the young people mock him.

Uncle George speaks kindly to George as he leaves, saying he'll probably never see him again, mentioning a girl he wanted to marry many years ago, and telling George he was fond of him, but didn't like him and thought he should be hanged—but now he likes him for how he has stood up under pressure—and so does someone else (Lucy)!

2. What does George believe that his worst day on earth was? How does he spend his last night in the Amberson home?

George walks home, reminiscing about the places in town where he grew up, even his own house. Fanny has set up an apartment life for her and George, but he doesn't want to live there. He arrives home, feeling guilty and thinking that his worst day was when his mother had heard what he had said to Eugene. George spends the last night in his mother's room kneeling in prayer, asking his mother and God to forgive him.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- George is destitute in two ways. First, the Amberson fortune is gone. Second, he has been left without his mother, without Lucy, without a job, and without a place to stay.
- The irony in this chapter is that George now has to work—to “do” something instead of “be” something.

Week 27, Day 3: Chapter XXXII

1. Why does George tell Fanny he's not staying with her anymore? Why does Fanny panic?

George helps Fanny and tells her he's not staying with her because he couldn't pay his fair share. Fanny panics, begging him not to leave her, because it turns out she's lost ALL her money in the headlight invention.

2. Sum up the conversation George has with Frank Bronson. What kind of job does he need to find?

George tells Frank Bronson he can't be a lawyer because he needs more money now. Bronson says he feels responsible since he got Fanny into investing in auto headlights. George asks Bronson to help him find a dangerous, but high-paying, job, and Bronson agrees.

3. List at least two ways in this chapter that George shows courage and self-control.

George rallies Fanny; he shows his mettle and toughness in facing grim prospects. George also says he needs to make up for a few important things, and he risks danger to his health so he can help Fanny pay the bills.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- George's prayer has played a part in changing his attitude. He realizes the importance of "doing" instead of "being," and he seems to have long-term plans on righting wrongs in his life. (And he probably wishes he hadn't fooled around in school!)

Chapter XXXIII

1. Describe George's work. What do the other apartment renters in his building say about him? How does he react?

George works hard, suffering taunts of other renters as being "stuck-up" without saying anything.

2. What does George see on his walks through the town? What does this indicate to the reader?

He takes long walks through the dirty, gray town, noticing the Amberson buildings and homes are gone and replaced with other structures. Even "Amberson Boulevard" is renamed "Tenth Street." When he reads a book in the library about great citizens of Midland, the name "Amberson" is not listed among them.

3. What has George finally received that the citizens of Midland had hoped for years ago? What is ironic about his receiving it?

George has received his COMEUPPANCE! The irony is that those who wanted to see it happen didn't see it happen, because too much time went by, and the town became so large that the doings of the Ambersons became less important.

Week 27, Day 4: Chapter XXXIV

1. What has happened to Lucy's "Beautiful House"?

George sees Lucy's "Beautiful House" (white), which is painted dark, since the gray soot can't be kept away from staining it.

2. What has Lucy still *not* done? Explain her Indian story. What does she mean when she describes a tribe that hates their chief, but still "weren't able to discover any other warrior that they wanted to make chief in his place"?

George sees Eugene on the street, but they both avoid each other. Lucy visits Fanny 2-3 times per year, but neither mentions George. Lucy is busy, but still single.

Eugene says he'd be able to tolerate George, and could even build a house for him and Lucy close by, but Lucy doesn't like the idea, since it's too much like the Ambersons' setup. Lucy invents an Indian story for her father about a tribe that hates their chief, "but they weren't able to discover any other warrior that they wanted to make chief in his place," meaning Lucy is irritated at George, but can't forget him.

3. What does Fred Kinney tell Eugene? How does Eugene respond?

Eugene talks to Fred Kinney about George, and Fred tells him George is a nitroglycerin expert. He asks Eugene if he has a job for George, but Eugene says no, and Fred says George will be lucky to live much longer without an accident.

4. How is George hurt?

George is hit by a car while deep in thought and has his legs broken. He manages to call the driver "Riffraff!" before going to the hospital.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- The white house darkened by soot could be symbolic of George, who has had such "darkness" overtake his life, especially brought on by changes in technology (represented by the soot).
- George's being hit by a car is symbolic, again because he has always hated automobiles and what they represent to him: change, and Eugene Morgan.

Chapter XXXV

1. Why doesn't Eugene want to help George? How could he have helped George without wounding his pride?

Eugene still doesn't want to help George; he is too angry still about what happened with Isabel. George wouldn't take the job anyway, but Eugene thinks if he wanted he could have hired George through one of the other companies he secretly owned.

2. Describe George's thoughts in the hospital bed.

In the hospital bed George thinks of Eugene as the same as his grandfather—respected, well-known, and rich.

3. What touching coincidence happens to Eugene and Lucy? How do George and Eugene resolve their differences? Why does Eugene decide to help George in the future?

Eugene sees George's accident in the paper, but is still unmoved because George cost him and Isabel years of happiness. Eugene thinks fondly of Isabel, writes Lucy, and receives a letter from Lucy saying the same thing!

He goes from the train to see George at the hospital, and Lucy is already there, knowing he would come. George asks him to forgive him, and Eugene feels he has been true at last to Isabel by helping George.

Additional Chapter Notes:

- The irony in Eugene's bitter behavior toward George comes from the fact that Eugene is angry at George for costing him years of happiness with Isabel, when now his (Eugene's) actions are causing his daughter Lucy years of happiness with George.

Week 28, Day 1: Regret

1. List some ways Mamzelle Aurlie has to adjust with children around.

She has to care for them, put them to sleep, feed them, bathe them, get used to the noise they make, and generally adjust her life to make sure they're taken care of.

2. What is symbolic about Mamzelle Aurlie's putting on her apron and using her sewing basket, both for the first time in years?

It's as if she's "becoming a woman" again, which contrasts with how she's described as dressing and acting like a man at the beginning.

3. What does it mean to cry "like a man," as Mamzelle Aurlie does at the story's end? How does this allude to—and contrast with—the description of Mamzelle Aurlie in the first paragraph?

To cry hard and roughly; this reminds the reader of Mamzelle Aurlie's man-like description at the story's opening, when she has softened somewhat, shown by her crying.

4. Why is this story titled "Regret"?

Probably because Mamzelle Aurlie regrets being married and having children.

Week 28, Day 2: Poor, Dear Margaret Kirby

1. What positive and negative traits does Margaret possess at the story's opening? How does she come across badly after John opens up to her?

She lives a life devoted to nothing but pleasure and ease, and accomplishes nothing; but she seems genuinely desirous of improving her marriage and won't badmouth her husband to others—and is bothered about living a lifestyle in which women brag about what they don't do rather than what they do.

When John opens up to her, she only thinks of how this will affect her—and even realizes she hasn't been listening to John's attempts to tell her of the troubles up until then—while he is determined to commit suicide.

2. What does John find out the first time he walks to Margaret's residence? How does his new position affect the Kirbys?

It is an ugly old double house, which she has been forced to live in, having sold everything to help out John's firm. Margaret was looking for a secretary job, but ended up co-managing the boarding house, even helping her partner with her family's debts and troubles.

John gets a modest job in a small town, gains his health back, and finds a small cottage he moves himself and Margaret into.

3. What is ironic about these story quotes: (a) Margaret's saying at the story's opening, "Thank Heaven, there isn't a child to complicate things!"; (b) Margaret's saying about a couple she sees out, "Fifty-cent dinner? It must be awful!"; (c) Margaret's biographer's saying, "Absolutely, they might as well be buried!"

Because at the story's end, the children do complicate things—by enriching the Kirby's lives; the cheaper dinners she enjoys later are much more rewarding; the Kirbys are much more alive than they were living as a "society couple."

4. Compare the moral of "Poor, Dear Margaret Kirby" to the warnings in Proverbs 17:1, Proverbs 25:24, and James 5:1.

Proverbs 17:1 Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife.

Proverbs 25:24 It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.

James 5:1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

Week 29, Day 1: The Cure for a Troubled Heart

1. What chapter does Truett say many Christians would choose as the most comforting chapter in the Bible? Why?

John 14. In this chapter Jesus tells His disciples not to be troubled, even though he is leaving them soon.

2. What effect(s) are created by Truett's repeating certain phrases and questions several times in succession during this sermon? List some of these repeated phrases.
 - "How may a troubled heart be cured?"
 - "The doctrine of the stoic."
 - "Can you gainsay...?"
 - "Go with a brother's...."

They drive home the words to the listener; to achieve rhythm in speech.

3. List some reasons that Truett says people despair. What does he say is the worst reason? What are some "cures" for a troubled heart Truett says that the world offers?

People despair, for example, over business failure, betrayal of a friend, and ill health—but the worst and most common reason is sin. Suicide, stoicism, epicureanism, vacations, denial of sin and death and sorrow are "cures" the world offers.

4. What does God's Word offer as the cure for a troubled heart? Why does Truett say that we should "stake our all on Christ"?

The words of Jesus: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God; believe also in me." We should stake our all on Christ because (a) He is worthy, (b) we would be lost without His counsel as the light of the world, (c) He answers the three most vexing questions humanity has (sin, sorrow, death).

5. What does Truett say is the "chiefest mystery of all"? How is Jesus the answer to it? Explain how the six-year-old girl's funeral shows the different approaches people have to the mystery.

The mystery of what happens after death. Jesus has gone into death, arisen from it, and conquered it. The little girl's funeral shows how those who believe in Jesus can be secure that death is not the end, as opposed to those who do not trust in Him.

Week 29, Day 2: America's Present Emergency

1. What three things does Wheeler say are at stake for America? Explain the “two schools of thought” about America’s entrance into World War II.

The three items at stake for Americans are their independence, our government, and our businesses. The two schools of thought are (a) we have to come to England’s aid, or America will be taken over by some European nation, or (b) there is no way that any European dictator will be able to conquer 130,000,000 people who have adequate defense.

2. What does Wheeler mean by saying, “[I]f we lend or lease war materials today, we will lend or lease American boys tomorrow”?

Putting ourselves through weapon sales and loan will lead to putting our entire nation at war.

3. Give reasons why Wheeler says that German takeover of the mainland United States is impossible.

The huge number of planes, tanks, ships, and men makes it impossible, especially in the light of the resistance they would face from American weapons. Also, Germany has not even been able to cross the English Channel, which is only 20 miles wide.

4. How do the items in Wheeler’s “cost of this war” paragraph represent ideas Americans oppose?

Higher taxes, fewer rights of speech and business are results more compatible with tyrannical governments than with American ideals.

5. What does Wheeler say will *not* result in a more sure defeat of Nazism? What does he say *will*?

Removing Hitler will not result in the defeat of Nazism; only the offer of a just peace to the German people will.

6. What does Wheeler say that the United States can do to stay at peace? What does he say that the pro-war propaganda put out by the government appeals to? Explain what he says is happening to those Americans who oppose its entrance into World War II.

If the people spread the idea of jumping into the European war. The propaganda, Wheeler says, appeals to Americans’ Christianity, idealism, humanity, and loyalty. Many Americans opposed to war are being labeled “appeasers” and “unwitting tools of dictators.”

7. With what appeals to the people does Wheeler end his radio address?

To remember the disaster of America’s entrance into World War I, to stand up against mass hysteria, to make themselves heard, and to contact their Congressmen and tell them they want no part in the war.

Week 29, Day 3: Miss Hinch

1. Why are the citizens of New York City in such a jumpy state, as explained in the story’s beginning?

Two weeks ago, actress and impersonator Miss Hinch killed John Catherwood, a man who jilted her for another woman. Miss Hinch is still at large, and since she is an expert at play-acting and makeup, people are suspicious of each other. They do, however, often talk to strangers to see what they think about the mystery.

2. What do the newspaper, the clergyman, the service-woman, and the old gentleman say about Miss Hinch and Jessie Dark?

The newspaper relates that the police have almost given up finding Miss Hinch, and that even Jessie Dark has been unsuccessful, even after finding so many criminals. The service-woman tells the clergyman that her friend is Catherwood's mother, and that she heard through her that Miss Hinch is an evil woman. The clergyman remarks that if that is true, her sins will find her out.

The service-woman praises Jessie Dark, and the clergyman says he is disappointed that Miss Dark hasn't found Miss Hinch. The old gentleman bursts into the conversation and defends Jessie Dark's methods, saying Miss Hinch will be caught.

3. Why does the service-woman ask the clergyman for a pencil? Why does he suddenly ask her if she had seen Mrs. Catherwood?

She is writing notes to the police, to tell them where Miss Hinch is. The clergyman asks the service-woman if she had seen Mrs. Catherwood that day to test her story, because "he" suspected that she was actually following "him."

4. How does Henry Sydnor Harrison create suspense?

By slowly revealing details, he gets the reader to suspect certain characters of being impersonators. The cat-and-mouse mental games that Miss Hinch and Jessie Dark play make the reader hope that good wins out, and the attempted escape and wait for the police add to the suspense.

5. Why does the old woman get off the train with the clergyman? Why does she not want to stop at a well-lit lunch counter? Explain the mystery of the bill at the restaurant.

She is tailing Miss Hinch. She doesn't want to eat at the well-lit restaurant because she doesn't want Miss Hinch to see that she is made up as an old woman.

6. Why does the clergyman prick his finger with the pin?

He wants to use the blood to pretend that the old woman has cut her face, so he can rub her face to see if it is indeed, makeup to resemble an old woman's face.

7. How are the clergyman's words "Her sin will assuredly find her out" ironic?

Miss Hinch's sins did find her out, all right!

Week 30, Day 1: A Father to His Freshman Son

1. What does Martin warn his son about college?

The distractions, temptations to drink, the desire to go through life without working, etc.

2. What positive things does he encourage his son to do?

To make himself worth knowing, exercise his mind, listen to good instructors, take on responsibilities, show good manners, respect others, worship God, etc.

3. What does Martin mean by saying, “There is no real fun in ease, except as you need it because you have worked hard”?

It’s not fun to be lazy all the time; restful times and fun are only really enjoyed if you’ve earned them.

4. If you were a parent of a young person entering college, what piece(s) of advice would you give?

Answers will vary!

The Art of Governing

1. To the author, what is “the most trying moment in the twenty-four hours”? Why?

The moment you wake up and have to face life’s difficulties.

2. Why does the author say many people crave a government job?

They would rather not face life—to have to work to earn a living; it would be easier just to get a salary for doing nothing really useful, with no hard decisions.

3. Give your thoughts on this statement by the author: “Many men who would make very respectable Presidents of the United States could not successfully run a retail grocery store.”

Answers will vary!

4. What real challenges does Warner say are faced by business owners?

How to make a living by the sweat of their brow, involving many complex decisions and dealings with difficult customers, with the threat of failure and loss of income constantly hanging over his head.

5. What does the author mean by saying, “‘Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown’ does not refer to the discomfort of wearing it, but to the danger of losing it”?

He means that kings and leaders don’t worry about their great responsibilities; they worry about losing their great positions.

6. What does Warner say about politicians’ decisions?

That they hardly care about doing the right, moral thing—just the thing that will benefit themselves the most.

Week 30, Day 2: Brandenburg Gate Speech

1. What kind of speaking style does President Reagan display in this speech?

Crisp, direct, complimentary of Germany. He also spoke at a slower speed than normal, since there were many in the audience whose first language was not English.

2. What specific words does Reagan use to describe the Berlin Wall’s oppressiveness?

Concrete, barbed wire, dog runs, guard towers, and so on.

3. Explain the meanings of these phrases from the “Brandenburg Gate” speech:

- “Standing before the Brandenburg Gate, every man is a German, separated from his fellow men. Every man is a Berliner, forced to look upon a scar.”

Anyone who sees the wall can feel the oppression it imparts; everyone who loves freedom hates it.

- “[O]ur differences are not about weapons, but about liberty.”

The source of disagreement and tension between communist governments and free governments is not the fact that both are armed, but the fact that communist governments do not allow basic rights for their peoples, and threaten to take over other nations.

4. To what does Reagan attribute the rapid success of West Berlin’s economy? What examples does he list of this? How does he compare this to the record of communism?

To economic freedom. He lists businesses, homes, parks, streets, lawns, universities, culture, food, clothing, automobiles, hotels, and so on. The communist record is that of failure, poverty, and backwardness in every living standard measurable.

5. What signs does President Reagan see that Russian communism is weakening? What does he say would be the best way for Russia to show it is truly reforming?

He mentions the glasnost and perestroika policies of Gorbachev, but says that tearing down the Berlin Wall would be a real sign of reform.

6. What does President Reagan offer those nations’ governments who want to change their policies to allow for freedoms for their citizens? How does this relate to why he chose Berlin as the place to make this speech? List some ways that Reagan says a free Berlin could be useful.

The cooperation and backing of freer nations like the United States. Berlin is a perfect example of a city divided by freedom and oppression. A free Berlin, Reagan says, could be an important airport hub, a meeting center, a place for cultural exchange, sports events like the Olympics, and so on.

7. Why does Reagan say that communism “produces backwardness”?

It refuses to allow humans to create, to produce, to innovate, to worship God.

8. What do you think the most famous line is in this speech? Why? “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!”

Week 30, Day 3: The Most Dangerous Game

1. Sum up Rainsford’s feeling about hunting at the story’s beginning, based on his conversation with Whitney.

He thinks it’s a fun sport, and a challenge, and doesn’t care about how the animals feel.

2. What sound does Rainsford hear on the island (a) right before he falls overboard, and (b) as he is swimming to the island? How does this second sound repeat at the end of the story?

He hears (a) a gun fired three times, and (b) “a high screaming sound, the sound of an animal in an extremity of anguish and terror” (a human scream, which he does not realize at the time). The human scream is repeated

at the end of the story; this occurs when Zaroff screams in response to Rainsford's surprising him in his room after their hunt.

3. What evidence of a hunt does Rainsford find on the island when he wakes up? What to him seems odd about this evidence?

He finds weeds crushed, blood stains, and other evidence that a "large animal" had been hunted. He also finds an empty cartridge from a .22 pistol, which seems strange to Rainsford, because for hunting such a large animal, the hunter usually would use a larger caliber bullet.

4. Describe General Zaroff. What is ironic in his words to Rainsford describing his servant Ivan: "A simple fellow, but, I'm afraid, like all his race, a bit of a savage." What does Connell suggest when he says that Zaroff "showed red lips and pointed teeth"?

Zaroff is aristocratic, with a military-like demeanor, a snappy dresser, and cultured. He is also an expert hunter and well-read on the subject. The irony in his statement about Ivan is that Zaroff is actually more than a bit of a savage himself. Connell's description of Zaroff's red lips suggest a link between Zaroff and the bloody trail Rainsford had found earlier, and Zaroff's pointed teeth suggest that he is like an animal.

5. What habit of Zaroff's makes Rainsford uncomfortable after they have first met? What is the significance of this behavior?

Zaroff studies Rainsford carefully. Later the reader understands that this is because Zaroff is trying to determine what kind of prey Rainsford will be.

6. Explain why Zaroff believes it is appropriate to hunt men. How does the Christian view of mankind differ from Zaroff's Darwinist, "survival of the fittest" worldview? (See Genesis 2:7, Psalm 8, Acts 17:24-26, Matthew 19:16-22, 1 Thessalonians 5:14, and Romans 15:1.)

Zaroff believes men are simply animals that can and should hunt each other if they can win. The Christian believes man was created as a "living soul" (Genesis 2:7) and "a little lower than the angels" (Psalm 8). The Bible teaches that there are no "inferior races," since God has "made of one blood all nations of men" (Acts 17:24-26). Jesus commands us not to murder, among other things (Matthew 19:16-22), and Christians are commanded by God to "support the weak (1 Thessalonians 5:14, Romans 15:1).

7. What "choice" does Zaroff offer his prey? Why does Rainsford decline Zaroff's offer to show him his "new collection of heads"?

Either to be hunted, or to be tortured with a whipping from Ivan. Rainsford doesn't want to see the new heads, because they will probably be stuffed human heads.

8. How does Rainsford survive and win the hunt? What is the irony in his disagreeing with Whitney at the story's beginning, when Whitney says that hunting is not a good sport for the animals?

Rainsford leaves trails, injures Zaroff with a Malay man-catcher, kills one of his dogs with a tiger trap, kills Ivan with a knife attached to a vine spring, and then leaps into the sea when Zaroff is pursuing with his hounds. Then Rainsford sneaks into Zaroff's castle, hides in his room, and kills him. Rainsford finds out that Whitney was right about hunting not being a good sport for the hunted animals, because he (Rainsford) is hunted himself!

9. What is the double meaning of the story's title? What idea does Connell present in this story (i.e., the story's *theme*)? What effect might World War I (which had ended only six years before the writing of this story) have had on "The Most Dangerous Game"?

First, "The Most Dangerous Game" refers to the "game" of hunting, which is dangerous because of the potential dangers involved in hunting predatory animals. Second, "The Most Dangerous Game" refers to the most dangerous animal to hunt—man.

One of the themes Connell seems to present is the idea that the worldview that different "races" are worth less is wrong. This view of "inferior races" had become widespread due to the influence of evolutionism in the 19th century, and was reinforced by propaganda in World War I, in which the peoples of nations were encouraged by their governments to regard their own particular nation as superior to all others (and the citizens of other nations as inferior, and therefore acceptable victims of conquest and murder during war time).