

The Minister's Black Veil Discussion Questions

As you read today, look at these questions and write responses on a separate sheet of paper. Answering questions such as these will help you to be an active reader and question the true meaning of the text. We will be using all of these questions in a classwide discussion (in which you will be graded). Remember, use textual evidence to guide your answers and interpretations of these questions.

- 1) What is an allegory? How is this story an allegory?
- 2) What is a parable? How is this story a parable?
- 3) How do secrets play a role in this story? How is it similar to real life?
- 4) Does this town like the “change” in its minister? Would people have reacted the same if a non-authority figure wore the veil?
- 5) How does Hawthorne describe the veil? Give a quote from the text.
- 6) What is the significance of the topic of the first sermon Mr. Hooper gives with the veil on?
- 7) How does the quote by “the old lady” (pg. 319) which reads, “He has changed himself into something awful, only by hiding his face” make sense? Think about how you might respond to someone of authority wearing a veil like this.
- 8) How does wearing the veil affect the funeral and the wedding? Why would the reaction be different?
- 9) What is the definition of “black”/“white”? How does Hawthorne use these colors to add to the “Romantic” touch?
- 10) What’s Elizabeth’s relationship to Hooper? What eventually happens to her? What does she become?
- 11) How does Hawthorne use “the wind”?
- 12) How does the world outside the town react to the veil?
- 13) Why is Father Hooper wearing a veil?
- 14) What is with Mr. Hooper’s “sad” or “melancholy” smile? Hawthorne mentions this many times. Why is he smiling like this and so frequently?
- 15) What do Father Hooper’s final words disclose about his possible reasoning for wearing the veil? On his deathbed what did Hooper say was the real reason children ran from him and people shrank from him?
- 16) What word can best take the place of “veil”?
- 17) What parallels do you see from this story to The Crucible?