

Universal Questions for Literature Studies



Relating to the Characters

- In what ways are the belief systems and values of the characters presented in the story?
- Are the characters in the story credible?
- What makes a minor character memorable?
- How do things look for this character at this point of the story?
- Do you disagree with any actions or decisions of the characters?
- Given what the author has already told us about this character, what are the character's motives at this point?
- Consider the main character: what does he or she believe in? What is he or she willing to fight for?
- What conflicts do the main character face?
- What four questions would you like the main character to answer?
- What three pieces of advice would you give the main character?
- Who were the "winners" and "losers" in this story? Explain.
- What are the most important relationships in the story?
- At the end of the book, what feelings are expressed by the characters?

Engaging the Author



- What does the author mean here?
- Did the author explain this clearly?
- Does this make sense with what the author told us before?
- How does this connect with what the author has told us here?
- What four questions would you like to ask the author?
- What techniques did the author use to develop the characters, plot, and themes?

- What theories do you have about the author's personality and beliefs?
- What do you think the author wants you to know or learn?
- What do you think the author was trying to accomplish with this story?

Making Personal Meaning



- What have you read that is similar in this story?
- What are some of the major themes of this story?
- Which is stronger in the book: plot or character development? Why? Do you think this was intentional on the part of the author?
- Did you find this story a quick read? Why or why not?
- What are the most revealing scenes?
- Did you find any flaws in the story?
- Were you satisfied with the climax and resolution of this story?
- Do you consider this book to be a “classic”? Why or why not?
- Which events in the story are relevant to your own life?
- How did this story give you a better understanding of human nature?
- What impact has this story made on you?

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