

Chapters 16 – 18

Comprehension Check

Directions: As you read each chapter, answer the following questions on a separate piece of paper using complete sentences.

Chapter 16

1. What does Pearl say is the reason that the sun shines on her, but not her mother?
2. What does Pearl believe about the scarlet letter?
3. What does Pearl ask Hester when they sit and take a break in the forest?
4. What response does Hester give?
5. What comment does Pearl make about the Black Man and Dimmesdale?

Chapter 17

1. Briefly summarize what Dimmesdale tells Hester when she asks, "Is there no reality in the penitence thus sealed and witnessed by good works? And wherefore should it not bring you peace?"
2. What does Hester reveal to Dimmesdale? What is his reaction?
3. What is the threat that looms over Hester, Pearl, and Dimmesdale if they reveal Chillingworth's true identity?
4. What does Hester suggest they do?
5. What is Dimmesdale's attitude about life at this point? How does he feel emotionally and physically?

Chapter 18

1. Who have been Hester's teachers in these last seven years, according to the narrator?
2. How has Dimmesdale lived the past seven years?
3. What does Hester do in the middle of the forest that allows the sun to shine on her?
4. How does she feel and look after doing so?
5. Describe Pearl's relationship with nature.