

THE SCARLET LETTER EXAM

Answer *three* of the following prompts. Be sure to use specific examples from the story to back up your claims.

1. **Symbolism:** The characters of *The Scarlet Letter* symbolize and embody different ideas. Considering the themes of sin, forgiveness, guilt, and revenge, what could each of the four main characters of *The Scarlet Letter* (Hester, Dimmesdale, Pearl, and Chillingworth) represent? Explain why each character symbolizes that particular idea.
2. **Theme:** *The Scarlet Letter* deals with the themes of sin and guilt. Who do you believe is the most evil character in the story? Why is this character's evil greater than the evil committed by the other characters?
3. **Author's Purpose:** Supernatural phenomena (or at least supposed supernatural phenomena) play an important part in *The Scarlet Letter*. Name at least three "supernatural" events in the story, and explain their significance and importance in the story. Also explain why you feel the author included these events in the story.
4. **Theme:** The Puritans obviously considered their society to be very pure. Explain why Puritan society, as presented here, is actually deeply flawed.
5. **Characterization:** Is Hester *truly* sorry for her sin? Explain your answer using details from the story.
6. **Characterization:** Why does Hester continue to wear the scarlet letter, even though she has the power to remove it?