

Lesson Tutor



Scarlet Letter

Author: Nathaniel Hawthorne

Assignments – Part I
Chapters 1 -9

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(Note: If you do not have a dictionary that you like, I recommend Merriam-Webster's School Dictionary. One source for purchase of this dictionary is found online at: <http://www.lessontutor.com/lcreate9home.html> .)

Assignments
Scarlet Letter
Nathaniel Hawthorne

Chapter 1

Synopsis:

The reader's focus is directed to an old churchyard, cemetery, and jail. A rosebush grows just outside the prison door.

Vocabulary:

1. The Word: **edifice**

In Context: "A throng of bearded men ... assembled in front of a wooden edifice, the door of which was heavily timbered with oak and studded with iron spikes." (p.45)

Guess the

Meaning: _____

Dictionary Definition:

Your Sentence:

2. The Word: **Utopia** (sometimes not capitalized)

In Context: "The founders of a new colony, whatever Utopia of human virtue and happiness they might originally project, have invariably recognized it among their earliest practical necessities to allot a portion of the virgin soil as a cemetery..." (p.45)

Guess the

Meaning: _____

Dictionary Definition:

Your Sentence:

3. The Word: **sepulchre**

In Context: "...they marked out the first burial-ground, on Isaac Johnson's lot, and round about his grave, which subsequently became the nucleus of all congregated sepulchres in the old churchyard of King's Chapel." (p.45)

Guess the
Meaning: _____

Dictionary Definition:

Your Sentence:

4. The Word: **inauspicious**

In Context: "Finding it (the rose bush) so directly on the threshold of our narrative, which is now about to issue from that inauspicious portal, we could hardly do otherwise than pluck one of its flowers..." (p.46)

Guess the
Meaning: _____

Dictionary Definition:

Your Sentence:

5. The Word: **portal**

In Context: "Finding it (the rose bush) so directly on the threshold of our narrative, which is now about to issue from that inauspicious portal, we could hardly do otherwise than pluck one of its flowers..." (p.46)

Guess the
Meaning: _____

Dictionary Definition:

Your Sentence:

Writing Assignment:

In the very first chapter, we see Hawthorne's ability to use symbolism. Consider this passage that refers to the rose bush outside the prison door:

Finding it so directly on the threshold of our narrative, which is now about to issue from that inauspicious portal, we could hardly do otherwise than pluck one of its flowers and present it to the reader. It may serve, let us hope, to symbolize some sweet moral blossom that may be found along the track or relieve the darkening close of a tale of human frailty and sorrow.

Hawthorne was a master of symbolism. In this passage, he not only uses the rose to symbolize the mingling of sweetness with sadness, but he uses foreshadowing in the last sentence to prepare us for a story of "human frailty and sorrow."

Write a four-paragraph paper. The first paragraph should be an introduction that opens up the subject of an author's use of symbolism and foreshadowing as literary tools. The second paragraph should define symbolism. The third should define foreshadowing. The last paragraph will be a conclusion paragraph where you summarize what you have presented. An outline would look something like this:

Literary Tools of Symbolism and Foreshadowing

- I. Introduction
- II. Symbolism
- III. Foreshadowing
- IV. Conclusion

Use other sources to research your topic.



About this teacher/author: Elaine Ernst Schneider is a teacher and freelance writer who has published books, articles, songs, and children's work. She is the managing editor of www.lesstutor.com. She currently teaches and writes curriculum for several education companies.