

Anthem – by Ayn Rand

Guided Reading Questions

CHAPTER 1

1. Explain all the ways in which Equality 7-2521 states that he is different from everyone else.
2. The average man lives only to the age of 45. Offer several possible explanations as to why life expectancy is so short in this society.
3. Why does the Council of Vocations assign Equality 7-2521 the job of street sweeper? Is it due to an error, incompetence, or a more sinister motive?
4. Does the novel take place in the past, present, or future? How do you know?
5. Why do the teachers of Equality 7-2521 disapprove of his quick mind?
6. At this point in the novel does Equality 7-2521 accept the teachings of his society? If so, why doesn't he feel shame or remorse when he knows he's committed a crime?
7. Equality 7-2521 frequently mentions a "curse". What you do think his "curse" is?

CHAPTER 2

1. Re-read the account of Liberty 5-3000 on pages 38 and 39. What character traits are revealed in this description?
2. List 3 examples of how this society tries to wipe out each individual's mind (and self) by squashing personal choices, desires, and values. (List page numbers where information is found)
3. Contrast Equality 7-2521 with the rest of the men living in this society (page 46) How is he different? Be specific.
4. Explain why fear is the most prevalent emotion in this society.
5. What word is Equality 7-2521 trying to capture on page 49?
6. Why is mentioning this word the only crime punishable by death in this society? How does this word contradict the ideals of this society?

CHAPTER 3-4

1. What does Equality discover in this chapter? How important is this discovery?
2. Why is Equality frustrated with the Council of Scholars beliefs?
3. Why does Equality fight against them?
4. What name does Liberty 5-3000 choose for Equality? Why is it appropriate?
5. When Liberty 5-3000 brings water to Equality and he drinks it, what emotion is he feeling? Why doesn't he understand what he's feeling?

CHAPTERS 5-6

1. Describe the emotion that Equality is feeling at the beginning of Chapter 5.
2. Discuss Equality's main motivation for creating his new invention.
3. Discuss why Equality is so interested in seeing his own image at this point in the novel. Discuss the emotion he is feeling.
4. What does Equality expect will happen if he shows his discovery to the Council?
5. Discuss why the Prisoners never think to escape from the palace of corrective detentions.

CHAPTER 7

1. Explain what Equality means when he says, "We are old now, yet we were young this morning."
2. List 4 reasons why the council rejects Equality's invention.
3. What are the real reasons behind the rejection and the fear of the gift?

CHAPTER 8-9

1. What is Equality experiencing for the first time this morning? How does he feel as a result of this experience?
2. Why does Equality laugh when he realizes he is the dammed?
3. What does the uncharted forest symbolize in *Anthem*?
4. Does Equality have to worry about being followed by the others? Explain.
5. Equality questions the morality of his former society. Contrast what he was previously taught about solitude, good, evil, and joy to what he now believes.

CHAPTERS 10-11

1. Describe the house and its contents and explain why Liberty and Equality find it so strange and unique. They have only lived in institutionalized settings (hundreds to one room)
2. What great discovery does Equality make in this chapter?
3. Explain what the following quotes mean in your own words and discuss how they can be applied to your life:
 - a. "whatever the road I take, the guiding star is within me"
 - b. "for the word "we" must never be spoken, save by one's choice and as second thought"
4. What does Equality now realize is the proper goal and purpose of his life?
5. In what ways is "I" like a God? Explain.
6. Re-read the incident with the story of the pyre (page 50). What was he trying to communicate with Equality?

CHAPTER 12

1. Why do the characters take the new names of Prometheus and Gaea?
2. Discuss why they weren't allowed to choose their own names in their old society?
3. Discuss what Prometheus plans to do in the future and how this is different from his old society.
4. Prometheus realizes that to be free a man he must be free of his brothers (page 101). List 2-3 examples from *Anthem* that illustrate the truth of this statement.

