

“The Minister’s Black Veil”
By Nathaniel Hawthorne
p. 299

Answer the following questions about the short story.

1. Define symbol.
2. Define parable.
3. What do you think the black veil might symbolize?
4. Why might Mr. Hooper have put on the veil? Do you think it is important to know his reason? Why or why not?
5. What do you think Hawthorne means by “Secret sin”? (p. 301)
6. What are some of the different reactions to the veil from the people of Mr. Hooper’s parish?
7. Briefly describe Mr. Hooper’s **character** as revealed in the story’s opening paragraphs.
8. Why does the narrator say that no one just simply asked the minister his reasons for putting on the veil?
9. The parishioners speculate about Mr. Hooper’s reasons for wearing the veil. What are some of those reasons?
10. In one afternoon, the minister presides at both a funeral and a wedding. How do the people react to the presence of the veil at each event?
11. How does Hooper explain the wearing of the veil to Elizabeth?
12. What arguments against his wearing the veil does she make?
13. How does Elizabeth’s attitude about the veil change over the course of the story?
14. What are the tone and atmosphere of the story? Cite several words or phrases that suggest each.
15. What is the reason that Mr. Hooper gives for wearing the veil? (p. 307)
16. Look at your answer for question #2. What do you think is the moral or lesson of this story?