

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## THE SCARLET LETTER

**Chapter 9.** ("The Leech") Please answer the questions below. Your answers should be based on textual evidence, and may include some quoted material, but should be written with **your own words**. The questions follow the order of the events in the chapter.

1. What do we learn about Roger Chillingworth's name?

Unknown to all but Hester Prynne, and possessing the lock and key of her silence, he chose to withdraw his name from the roll of mankind, and, as regarded his former ties and interest, to vanish out of life as completely as if he indeed lay at the bottom of the ocean, whither rumor had long ago consigned him.

2. What question does Hawthorne raise about Chillingworth's decision to take up residence in Boston? (Don't quote the text; rephrase it in your own words)

Why would he want to stay there if Hester did him wrong?

3. What was there a shortage of in Boston? **Doctors**

4. What does the author suggest as a possible explanation for the above?

Skilful men, of the medical and chirurgical profession, were of rare occurrence in the colony. They seldom, it would appear, partook of the religious zeal that brought other emigrants across the Atlantic.

5. To what did the residents of Boston attribute Dimmesdale's poor health?

the paleness of the young minister's cheek was accounted for by his too earnest devotion to study, his scrupulous fulfilment of parochial duty, and, more than all, by the fasts and vigils of which he made a frequent practice, in order to keep the grossness of this earthly state from clogging and obscuring his spiritual lamp

6. It was feared that Dimmesdale might not have very long to live. The congregation feels that God may choose to cut his life short because \_\_\_ **the world was not worthy to be any longer trodden by his feet.** \_\_\_\_\_

---

What explanation does Dimmesdale give for why Providence might allow him to die prematurely?

**because of his own unworthiness to perform its humblest mission here on earth**

7. How do the colonists regard the arrival of Chillingworth?

**few people could tell whence, dropping down, as it were, out of the sky, or starting from the netherearth, had an aspect of mystery, which was easily heightened to the miraculous.**

8. To what do they attribute his arrival? Heaven had wrought an absolute miracle, by transporting an eminent Doctor of Physic, from a German university bodily through the air, and setting him down at the door of Mr. Dimmesdale's study!

9. Chillingworth offers his medical services to Dimmesdale. How does the young clergyman respond to this offer? "I need no medicine," said he

10. What does Dimmesdale indicate a desire for?

"Were it God's will," said the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale, when, in fulfilment of this pledge, he requested old Roger Chillingworth's professional advice, "I could be well content, that my labors, and my sorrows, and my sins, and my pains, should shortly end with me, and what is earthly of them be buried in my grave, and the spiritual go with me to my eternal state, rather than that you should put your skill to the proof in my behalf."

11. Dimmesdale and Chillingworth begin to spend more time together. What are two things they enjoy doing together? (p. 135-136)

They took long walks on the beach...visited each other at home

12. In the physician's (Chillingworth) opinion, what is one's physical health affected by?

Secret burdens

13. What qualities does a good physician possess that enable him to uncover what ails his patient? (p.137)

A man burdened with a secret should especially avoid the intimacy of his physician. If the latter possess native sagacity, and a nameless something more,--let us call it intuition; if he show no intrusive egotism, nor disagreeably prominent characteristics of his own; if he have the power, which must be born with him, to bring his mind into such affinity with his patient's, that this last shall unawares have spoken what he imagines himself only to have thought; if such revelations be received without tumult, and acknowledged not so often by an uttered sympathy, as by silence, an inarticulate breath, and here and there a word, to indicate that all is understood; if, to these qualifications of a confidant be joined the advantages afforded by his recognized character as a physician;--then, at some inevitable moment, will the soul of the sufferer be dissolved, and flow forth in a dark, but transparent stream, bringing all its mysteries into the daylight.

14. What happened that brought the clergyman and the physician even closer together?

## They live together

15. Most of the parishioners were pleased about the above arrangement, though they had hoped that the reverend might have gotten \_\_\_\_\_.

16. Though many people thought the friendship and care that Chillingworth offered the sickly clergyman would prove to be very beneficial to him, a certain portion of the community was becoming increasingly suspicious of the doctor. What was something that was brought to the attention of some of the members of the community?

There was an aged handicraftsman, it is true, who had been a citizen of London at the period of Sir Thomas Overbury's murder, now some thirty years ago; he testified to having seen the physician, under some other name, which the narrator of the story had now forgotten, in company with Doctor Forman, the famous old conjurer, who was implicated in the affair of Overbury

17. What physical changes was Chillingworth undergoing that people began to notice (noted also by Hester in chapter 8)?

At first, his expression had been calm, meditative, scholar-like. Now, there was something ugly and evil in his face, which they had not previously noticed, and which grew still the more obvious to sight, the oftener they looked upon him. According to the vulgar idea, the fire in his laboratory had been brought from the lower regions, and was fed with infernal fuel; and so, as might be expected, his visage was getting sooty with the smoke

18. What did some people increasingly suspect Chillingworth of being?

## The devil

Hawthorne's writing is filled with metaphors and imagery. It is as beautiful and intricate as Hester's embroidery. It takes the modern reader time and patience to discern the meaning of many of his sentences and phrases.

To what and/or whom do you think the following phrases refer?

19. p. 130. An inheritance so little desirable \_\_\_\_ **Hester's crime** \_\_\_\_\_

20. p. 132 If providence should see fit to remove him \_\_\_\_\_ **death** \_\_\_\_\_

21. p. 133 Stage-effect of what is called miraculous interposition \_\_\_\_ **Heaven does not need elaborate miracles to accomplish it's purpose**

22. p. 135 to walk with him on the golden pavements of the New Jerusalem \_\_\_\_ **be in heaven together** \_\_\_\_\_

---

23. p. 136. But the air was too fresh and chill to be long breathed with comfort.

---

24. p. 137 a treasure- seeker in a dark cavern \_\_\_\_\_light/dark  
imagery\_\_\_\_\_

25. p. 140 According to the vulgar idea, his laboratory had been brought from the lower regions and was  
fed with infernal fuel. \_\_\_\_\_he is the  
devil\_\_\_\_\_