

11/12 English - Summer Read
Jane Eyre by Emily Brontë
Study Questions

Direction: Answer each question as a complete sentence. Points will be deducted for fragments. Write/type on your own paper please. 😊

1. The importance of fire imagery throughout the novel is evident. For example, in "as if I had been wandering amongst volcanic-looking hills and had suddenly felt the ground quiver" (Ch. 18), we have an image that suggests one of the novel's major themes. How does Brontë employ fire both literally and figuratively in the Thornfield section?
2. (a) How does the manner in which Brontë communicates the "facts" surrounding Rochester's marriage to Bertha Mason influence our perception of that relationship? (b) What arguments might have Rochester promulgated if he wished to obtain a divorce from Parliament? (c) Why did Rochester keep Bertha a virtual prisoner at Thornfield for ten years? (d) Why does he refer to Bertha as his "Indian Messalina"?
3. The literary device of the mystically heard cry in the night can be traced back to the Old Testament account of an incident in the prophet Samuel's childhood (I Samuel 3: 4). Why does Charlotte Brontë employ this device in Chapter 35?
4. How do Jane's experiences at Moorhouse offer a complete contrast to her experiences at Thornfield?
5. What considerations — other than the proverbial happy ending — do you suspect provoked Charlotte Brontë to restore Rochester's sight at the end of the Ferndean section of the novel?
6. After Mason's visit to Thornfield, Jane asks herself, "What crime was this, that lived incarnate in this sequestered mansion, and could neither be expelled nor subdued by the owner?" (a) What crime does Bertha represent? (b) Why does Rochester keep her at Thornfield?
7. (a) Does Rochester ever actually intend to marry Blanche Ingram? (b) If so, when does he change his mind? If not, why does he go to such lengths to make Jane believe he does?
8. Rochester's disastrous marriage to Bertha was based on passion, while St. John refuses to marry Rosamund because of his passion for her. What is Brontë saying about the role passion should play in marriage?
9. Jane asserts her equality to Rochester and St. John. (a) What does Jane mean by equality, and (b) why is it so important to her?
10. When Jane first appears at Moor House, Hannah assumes she is a prostitute, but St. John and his sisters do not. What distinguishes the characters who misjudge Jane from those who recognize her true nature?

11. When Jane hears Rochester's voice calling while he is miles away, she says the phenomenon "is the work of nature." (a) What does she mean by this? (b) What are we intended to conclude about the meaning of this experience?

12. (a) What does St. John feel for Jane? (b) Why does Jane end her story with his prayer?