

“The Story of an Hour” Reading Interpretation Questions

Name _____

Period _____

Directions: Refer to the text of “The Story of an Hour” when responding to the following questions. **Write in complete sentences**, and check your work to ensure you have fully answered the questions. Refer to instances in the story to support your answers.

- 1) What **clues** in the story indicate that “The Story of an Hour” is **set in the late 1800’s**?

- 2) What is the **significance** of the **title**?

- 3) What are the **conflicts** in "The Story of an Hour"? **Label** the **conflicts** as **external** *or* **internal**.

- 4) Is Mrs. Mallard a **round** *or* **flat character**? Is she **static** *or* **dynamic**? **How do you know**?

- 5) **Why** do you think the author mentions **in the first paragraph** that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with **“heart trouble”**?

- 6) The **setting** of the story is very limited; it is confined largely to a room, a staircase, and a front door. How does this limitation help to express the themes or big ideas of the story? In other words, **why is the setting so limited**?

- 7) **In what ways** is this passage **significant**? "She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves."

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- 8) **What kind of relationships do the Mallards have?** Is Brently Mallard unkind to Louise Mallard, or is there some other reason for her saying "free, free, free!" when she hears of his death? How does she feel about him? Look to your story for **clues** and **evidence** to **justify your response**.
- 9) Mrs. Mallard closes the door to her room so that her sister Josephine cannot get in, yet she leaves the window open. Why does Chopin make a point of telling the reader this? **Consider the significance of the open window.**
- 10) Mrs. Mallard is described as descending the stairs "like a goddess of Victory." **In what ways does she feel herself victorious?**
- 11) The last line of the story is this: "When the doctors came they said she had died of heart disease--of joy that kills." **In what ways** is this an **ironic statement**? **What kind of irony** is it?
- 12) Not until Paragraph 16 does the reader learn the **protagonist's** (Mrs. Mallard's) first name, Louise. **Why** does the narrator delay in providing the reader with Mrs. Mallard's first name?
- 13) In the first full paragraph on the second page of the story, Mrs. Mallard considers if she did or did not feel a **“monstrous joy”**. The phrase “monstrous joy” is an **oxymoron**—two unlike terms which are paired together. **Why** do you feel the narrator uses the phrase “monstrous joy”? **Justify your response** with evidence from the story.