

Name _____ Class pd. _____ Date _____ Score _____

Directions: As you read Invisible Man, answer the following questions. Yes, you will need to use your own paper to answer the questions.

Prologue through Chapter 10

1. Why does the narrator beat up the man who insults him?
2. Since the narrator feels invisible, he feels justified in fighting darkness any way he can. What deeper meaning is implied in his needing so much light in his hole? What is the difference between him as a tinker and those whom he lists as American tinkers?
3. Like Dante's descent into purgatory in *The Divine Comedy*, the narrator's experience with marijuana takes him down into music that reveals parts of the African-American experience. What are the three levels through which he passes?
4. Louis Armstrong's blues song rouses the narrator to reality. Obviously, it gives the narrator a reason to answer the question by telling his story. What does it also inspire in him?
5. What is the significance of the school superintendent's presence at the battle royal?
6. When the narrator gets mixed up and says "social equality," he must immediately correct his error. What is the significance of that exchange between the speaker and the audience?
7. "I was swallowing blood" seems a simple explanation for the narrator being misunderstood. What is the author implying on a deeper level?
8. Comment on the significance of the gold coins being actually "brass pocket tokens advertising a certain make of automobile."
9. What might be foreshadowed by the narrator's dream about going to the circus with his grandfather?
10. At first, one sees the campus (in chapter 2) as a veritable Garden of Eden. Find three passages that do not fit this archetypical concept.
11. What is ironic about the narrator's view of the Founder's statue?
12. In chapter 5, notice the description of the mockingbird on the statue. What is important about this sight in light of the chapel service that has just ended?
13. Reread Dr. Bledsoe's diatribe against the narrator, found at the beginning of chapter 6. What does it reveal about Bledsoe?
14. In chapter 8, what serves to reinforce the narrator's invisibility?
15. In chapter 9, what is the meaning of the blueprints?

16. What is the narrator denying when he refuses to order grits?
17. What does the young Emerson mean when he says, "They're all loyal Americans"? What is satirical about such a remark?
18. What is the significance of the narrator reading the slogan, "If It's Optic White, It's the Right White," and his interpretation of it?
19. The plant produces paint for the government and uses a screaming eagle as a trademark. Explain the significance of these facts.
20. How is the narrator's dismissal from his job similar to his expulsion from school?

Chapters 11 through 21

21. What does the doctor's confidence in his machine satirize about modern society?
22. Explain the importance of the statement, "When I discover who I am, I'll be free."
23. Once, the narrator hoped to become the next Booker T. Washington. Thanks to Brother Tarp's picture, the narrator changes his mind. Why does Frederick Douglass become the narrator's new role model?
24. Read the last sentence of chapter 16. What is the narrator's feeling about the Brotherhood in relationship to his work? Compare that to his philosophy at the end of chapter 17. What change takes place in his thinking?
25. What is revealed about society in the nineteen-year experience of Brother Tarp?
26. Near the end of chapter 18, the narrator remarks that he is beginning to approach the depths of the Brotherhood that he had never been told about. What can now be inferred about the true nature of the Brotherhood?
27. Describe Tod Clifton's dolls. How are they made to dance, and what is their significance?

Chapter 22 through Epilogue

28. What does the narrator mean by his statement about dying with Tod Clifton?
29. What does the narrator mean when he says, "I'd have to do a Rinehart"?
30. The narrator comments that he thought the Brotherhood felt his skin color made no difference. What does he later think about this?
31. What does the narrator tell the audience at Clifton's funeral? What does he mean?
32. In the epilogue, what does the narrator say about the mind?
33. Explain the narrator's change in attitude between the prologue and the epilogue.