

## **Due Dates: *Beloved***

**Due to the nature of pacing for reading a novel as a class, late assignments will not be accepted. Plan accordingly.**

### **January 12, 2015**

Reading Comprehension Questions pp. 3-86 in class

Journal Entries 1-3 on EDMODO

### **January 20, 2015**

Reading Comprehension Questions pp. 87-158 in class

Journal Entries 4-6 on EDMODO

### **January 26, 2015**

Reading Comprehension Questions pp. 159-247 in class

Journal Entries 7-9 on EDMODO

### **February 2, 2015**

Reading Comprehension Questions pp. 248-324 in class

Journal Entries 10-12 on EDMODO

## ***Beloved Study Questions***

*Handwrite your answers to these questions on separate paper. I will collect them in class on the due dates.*

### Part I, First Chapter, pages 3-23

1. Elie Wiesel has said that nothing compares to the Holocaust from World War II and has rejected any comparisons. In her dedication, Toni Morrison is drawing a clear parallel to the Holocaust. Is this a valid comparison? If so, why? If not, why not?
2. What is 124?
3. Why are the sideboard moving, the house pitching, and the dog thrown across the room?
4. Who dies on page 5?
5. Why does Sethe want “Dearly Beloved” engraved on the tombstone?
6. Why does she have only “Beloved” engraved?
7. What do you understand from “The picture of the men coming to nurse her”? (p. 6)
8. Do the nephews rape Sethe in addition to taking her milk?
9. Who is Paul D, and what kind of person is he?
10. Why do the male slaves on Sweet Home let Sethe decide which man she wants?
11. Why does Mr. Garner say, “Neither would I”? (p. 12)
12. Why does Sethe choose Halle?
13. Why are so many of the slaves named “Paul”?
14. What details are you given about Sweet Home?
15. On page 16, Denver says the baby is “rebuked.” What is the connotation of this word?
16. Why is there a tree on Sethe’s back?
17. What is the significance of its being a chokecherry tree?
18. What is a tobacco tin?
19. What does Paul D do to the ghost?
20. What is Denver’s attitude toward the ghost?
21. Why does Beloved’s spirit stay on earth? Why doesn’t it go to Heaven or to Hell?

### Part I, Second Chapter, pp. 24-33

1. What motivates Sixo?
2. What happens to Baby Suggs’ other children?
3. How do Sethe and Paul D feel after they make love?

### Part I, Third Chapter, pp. 34-51

1. Why does Denver like the bower behind 124?
2. Who is in the white dress kneeling down next to Sethe with its sleeve around her waist?
3. What is the significance of the antelope metaphor on page 37?
4. Why does Denver love the part about Amy the best?
5. Why does Sethe lie about her name to Amy?
6. Why does Amy massage Sethe’s feet?
7. What is the significance of the colors described on pages 46-48?

### Part I, Fourth Chapter, pp. 52-59

1. What is the effect on the reader of having the three shadows holding hands?
2. What is the importance of the dying roses?

### Part I, Fifth Chapter, pp. 60-67

1. Who appears in front of 124?
2. Why is she wearing new shoes?

3. Why is her skin soft and smooth?
4. How does Denver react to Beloved's arrival?
5. Why does Beloved like sugar so much?
6. Why does Denver contradict what Paul D says at the end of the chapter?

Part I, Sixth Chapter, pp. 68-75

1. Why does Mrs. Garner give Sethe the earrings?
2. What are Sethe's memories of her own mother?
3. Why does her mother have a brand under her breast?
4. What is the meaning of a circle with a cross in it?
5. Why does Sethe's mother throw away all the other babies she had?

Part I, Seventh Chapter, pp. 76-86

1. Why is Beloved shining, and how does Paul D feel about it?
2. What is Sethe's reaction when she learns that Halle witnessed the incident in the barn when schoolteacher's nephews took her milk?
3. Why was Halle "sitting by the churn [with] butter all over his face"? (p. 82)
4. Why couldn't Paul D help Halle then?
5. What is a bit?
6. Why does Paul D have such affection and admiration for the rooster, Mister?

Part I, Eighth Chapter, pp. 87-100

1. What does Denver see when Beloved lets her head fall back?
2. What place is Beloved describing on page 88?
3. Who does Denver think Beloved is at this point in the story?
4. Is Beloved using Denver, or does she genuinely care for her?

Part I, Ninth Chapter, pp. 101-124

1. What does Sethe want to lay down?
2. What purpose does the Clearing serve during Baby Suggs' days?
3. Why does Sethe go to it now?
4. The AME is the African Methodist Episcopal Church. What role has it played in American history?
5. Why does the word "holy" follow Baby Suggs' name on page 102 and elsewhere?
6. What does the word "grace" mean in religious terms?
7. What is the significance of the name "Stamp Paid"?
8. Why does Baby Suggs say not to clean the baby's eyes until she gets the mother's urine?
9. Why is Sethe's older daughter called the "crawling-already? girl"?
10. Why is Beloved's given name never mentioned?
11. Who is trying to strangle Sethe in the Clearing?
12. Why is Sethe bothered by the kiss?
13. What are Beloved's feelings toward Paul D in this chapter?
14. Why does Denver accuse Beloved of choking Sethe?
15. Why does Morrison include Lady Jones in the story?
16. Why is Denver deaf for two years?
17. What is the answer Denver cannot bear to hear?
18. Why does Denver feel so possessive about Beloved?
19. What is the importance of the turtle?
20. Why does Denver want Beloved's forgiveness?

Part I, Tenth Chapter, pp. 125-133

1. Make a quick sketch of the ditch and boxes where Paul D and the rest of the chain gang are kept.
2. Why is Paul D trembling?
3. How do the guards demean the prisoners?
4. Who is Hi Man?
5. The Bible tells the Flood story in the book of Genesis. How does the story of the rains on the chain gang reflect the Flood story?
6. How do the men escape?
7. What disease do the Cherokees have?
8. Why does the chain gang stay near the Cherokees?
9. What is the significance of the trail of flowers that Paul D is told to follow?

Part I, Eleventh Chapter, pp. 134-138

1. Does Beloved consider Paul D a threat?
2. Why does Paul D decide to move out of 124?
3. What is the “confusion Beloved’s shining [causes] him”? (p. 135)
4. What are “house-fits”?
5. What is the meaning of the reference to Lot’s wife?
6. Why does Paul D call Beloved by her name?
7. What happens to his tobacco tin?
8. Why does he say, “Red heart” over and over again?

Part I, Twelfth Chapter, pp. 139-146

1. Why does Sethe ask Beloved about her mother?
2. Why does Denver believe that Beloved is the baby incarnate but Sethe doesn’t see it yet?
3. Why does Beloved always have a “licking fire that seemed always to burn in her”? (p. 141)
4. What is the “original hunger” that Denver feels? (p. 139, p. 141)
5. Why does Beloved play a cat-and-mouse game with Denver in the cold house?
6. What is Denver’s reaction to Beloved’s disappearance from the cold house?
7. Whose face does Beloved see?

Part I, Thirteenth Chapter, pp. 147-156

1. Why does Paul D feel unable to control his own actions around Beloved?
2. Why doesn’t Paul D want to ask Sethe for help?
3. Why does Paul D want Sethe to have his baby?
4. Why does Sethe say, “Mercy.” (p. 154)
5. Why is Beloved feeling malicious?

Part I, Fourteenth Chapter, pp. 157-158

1. Why is Beloved afraid that her body might be falling apart?
2. Why is Beloved crying?

Part I, Fifteenth Chapter, pp. 159-173

1. Why does Stamp Paid gather berries and bring them to Baby Suggs?
2. Why does Morrison include the reference to loaves and fishes?
3. Why is the rest of the community “offended by [the] excess”? (p. 163)
4. What is Baby Suggs’ perspective on her other seven children?
5. Why doesn’t Mr. Garner call Baby Suggs by her real name?
6. What mixed feelings does Baby Suggs have toward Mr. Garner at the end of the chapter?

Part I, Sixteenth Chapter, pp. 174-180

1. Why does Morrison use a Biblical allusion in the description of the four men coming to take Sethe back?
2. What is Sethe doing with her children in the shed?
3. What is schoolteacher's reaction to what Sethe does?
4. What is Baby Suggs' reaction?

Part I, Seventeenth Chapter, pp. 181-186

1. Why does Stamp Paid decide to show Paul D the newspaper clipping?
2. What is Paul D's reaction to it?
3. Why does Baby Suggs look at the stream and miss the arrival of the four horsemen?
4. Why doesn't the community warn them?
5. How does Sethe justify killing her own child?

Part I, Eighteenth Chapter, pp. 187-195

1. Why does Paul D show Sethe the clipping?
2. What is the importance of the hummingbirds?

Part II, First Chapter, pp. 199-235

1. What is the "Misery"? (p. 201)
2. Why does Sethe refuse to attend the service for Baby Suggs?
3. Why does Morrison include the Biblical verse, "Pride goeth before a fall"? (p. 202)
4. What are the voices that Stamp Paid hears as he approaches 124?
5. Why can't he knock on the door?
6. Why does Morrison include the biblical reference, "Spirit willing, flesh weak"? (p. 203)
7. Why does Sethe decide that the three of them will go ice-skating?
8. Why does Morrison repeat a reference to hands around Sethe's waist? (p. 206)
9. Why does Sethe say, "You finished with your eyes?" (p. 206)
10. When Sethe finally accepts who Beloved is, what is her reaction?
11. Why does Morrison use repeated references to locked boxes? (p. 207)
12. What is the importance of the red ribbon that Stamp finds?
13. What is the "roaring" on page 213?
14. Why don't they open the door when Stamp knocks?
15. Why does he change his name from Joshua?
16. Why does Paul D stay in town and sleep in the church cellar?
17. Why does Sixo say, "Improving your property, sir." (p. 224)
18. Why does Sethe tell the particular stories she does on pages 225-233?
19. What are the "black and angry dead" that Sixo thinks of on page 234?

Part II, Second Chapter, pp. 236-241

1. Page 236 starts a series of four chapters that are markedly different in point of view and style from the earlier ones. Why are they different?
2. The point of view is Sethe's, done in first person. What is the effect of this shift of perspective?
3. What does Sethe reflect upon in this chapter?

Part II, Third Chapter, pp. 242-247

1. This chapter is spoken in first person by Denver. What is the effect of this perspective?
2. What does Denver reflect upon in this chapter?
3. Why does Denver say, "She's mine, Beloved. She's mine." (p. 247)

Part II, Fourth Chapter, pp. 248-252

1. This chapter is spoken in first person by Beloved. What is the effect of this perspective?
2. Morrison chooses a stream of consciousness style for this chapter. How does this affect the reader?
3. Who is taking flowers away from leaves?
4. What pictures is Beloved thinking of?
5. Why does Beloved say, “[H]er face is my own”? (p. 248)
6. What is the “hot thing” Beloved refers to? (p. 248)
7. Why are they crouching?
8. Why is the man on her face dead? (p. 248)
9. What does it mean when the “men without skin bring [them] their morning water to drink”? (p. 210)
10. What does Beloved mean by “[W]e are all trying to leave our bodies behind”? (p. 248-9)
11. Why is the man’s body “a small bird”? (p. 249)
12. Why is the bread “seacolored”? (p. 249)
13. What “little hill of dead people” is she referring to? (p. 249)
14. Why are the dead people being pushed through with poles? (p. 249)
15. What is the circle around the woman’s neck? (p. 249)
16. Why is the woman with Beloved’s face in the sea? (p. 249)
17. What is the shining in the woman’s ears? (p. 249)
18. Why are the clouds in the way? (p. 250)
19. Why does she like his “pretty little teeth”? (p. 250)
20. Why does the woman go in? Where is she going? (p. 250)
21. Why is it Beloved’s “dark face that is going to smile at [her]”? (p. 250)
22. Why is Beloved not taken? (p. 251)
23. Where is the bridge that Beloved describes? (p. 251)
24. Why does Beloved go in the water? (p. 251)
25. Why is the woman chewing and swallowing? (p. 251-2)
26. Why does Beloved say, “Sethe’s is the face that left me.” (p. 252)

Part II, Fifth Chapter, pp. 253-256

1. Why does this chapter start with the same words as the previous one?
2. What sea does Beloved describe when she says, “Sethe went into the sea”. (p. 253)
3. Why does Beloved associate Sethe with the place where they crouched? (p. 253)
4. What gunsmoke does Beloved refer to? (p. 253)
5. Part of this chapter is written in poetic form. What is the effect of this technique?
6. Sethe uses the word “rememory,” but Beloved answers, “Yes. I remember you.” Why is this Sethe’s word alone? (p. 254)
7. On page 255, the point of view becomes more complex. Identify who is speaking each line on this page and the next, and explain why Morrison uses this intermingling of perspectives.
8. “I will take care of you.” (p. 256) Who is “I”? Who is “you”?
9. Why does the chapter end with “You are mine” repeated three times?

Part II, Sixth Chapter, pp. 257-270

1. Why is Paul D’s tobacco tin “blown open”? (p. 258)
2. What doubts does Paul D have of his own manhood?
3. What is the shining that lights the Thirty-Mile Woman?
4. Why does Sixo sing?
5. What does Sixo mean when he shouts, “Seven-O! Seven-O!” (p. 267)
6. Why is Sixo laughing when he dies?

Part II, Seventh Chapter, pp. 271-277

1. What is the tone of the conversation between Stamp and the man asks about Judy?
2. Where does Stamp think Beloved comes from?
3. What is the tone of the last sentence: “Why? Why? Why? Why? Why?” (p. 277)

Part III, First Chapter, pp. 281-309

1. Why is Denver worried?
2. In what ways have Sethe and Beloved traded places?
3. Why is Beloved becoming tyrannical and vindictive?
4. Why is Beloved’s stomach getting larger?
5. Why does the community rally in response to Denver’s request for work and the obvious problems at 124?
6. What accounts for Beloved’s behavior?
7. Why is Sethe getting smaller as Beloved gets bigger?
8. Why does Janey say, “I guess there’s a God after all.”? (p. 299)
9. Why do the Bodwins have a statue of a black boy that says, “At Yo Service”? (p. 300)
10. Why does Ella change her mind about Sethe and organize the other women to rescue her?
11. How does the singing of the women at the end of the book parallel to Paul D’s description of the escape of the chain gang?
12. In what ways does the group of neighborhood women serve the same function as the chorus in Greek tragedy?
13. What is the meaning of the Biblical reference, “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof”? (p. 256-257)
14. Why do the women decide to drive out Beloved?
15. Who was Medusa in Greek mythology? In what ways if Beloved portrayed as Medusa on page 302?
16. Why does Sethe think that Mr. Bodwin is schoolteacher?
17. What is Beloved’s reaction to Sethe’s running toward the women?

Part III, Second Chapter, pp. 310-322

1. Why does Beloved disappear?
2. Why do some people say she exploded?
3. Why are Stamp and Paul D finally able to laugh?
4. Why does Denver change her attitude toward Paul D?
5. Why does Paul D go to 124?
6. In what ways is Beloved’s departure in this chapter similar to and different from her death at the beginning?

Part III, Third Chapter, pp. 323-324

1. Why does the memory of Beloved disappear?
2. If this is not a story to pass on, why does Toni Morrison write it and “pass it on”?

## *Beloved* Reading Journals

### *General Instructions*

- Submitted on EDMODO **BEFORE** class begins on the due dates.
- Journal entries must be typed. Format as indicated in the example.
- Write the entries as you read—not when you finish reading the novel. Part of your grade will be based on whether the entry is written while you read—and it is easy to determine.
- Each entry should be approximately ¼ to ½ page in length. I am looking for quality, not quantity.
- Make sure to include the page number after the quoted text.
- You will complete **12** journal entries; the quotes about which you choose to write entries should be spaced out about every 25 pages.

<b>Text:</b> Record the text from <i>Beloved</i> in this space. Do not use the ellipsis mark before or after the quote; if the quote is important enough to comment on, then quote it all. Don't forget to include the page number after the quote.	
Critical, Analytical Response	Personal Response
<p>In this space you are to analyze Morrison's use of language and her narrative techniques that you noted. Consider the following questions: (naturally you wouldn't answer all of them for every entry—these are just suggestions)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Discuss the language in a specific passage. How does the <b>diction</b> contribute to the overall tone? Consider <b>connotations</b>.</li> <li>◆ How is the personality of a specific <b>character</b> established within a specific passage or stanza? Consider the use of dialogue, foils, and/or actions.</li> <li>◆ <b>Setting</b> is often a pivotal factor in the development of them.</li> <li>◆ Consider a notable <b>literary technique</b> in the text? Is there <b>irony</b>, <b>satire</b>, <b>symbolism</b>, <b>allusions</b>, etc.? What is the impact of the technique on the overall work?</li> <li>◆ Are there any <b>predominant images</b> that keep recurring throughout the work?</li> <li>◆ Discuss how some of the characters or situations fit into the typical <b>archetypal</b> categories.</li> <li>◆ Explain the effect of any unusual <b>organizational or rhetorical strategies</b> in the work—multiple narrators; pacing elements (flashbacks, intercalary chapters, time lapses, etc.); unusual punctuation or use of italics; chapter divisions; syntax, like repetition of words and phrases or rhetorical questions; letters about events.</li> <li>◆ What are the key characteristics of the speaker of narrator?</li> </ul>	<p>In this space write your personal response. Tell how the quote or events surrounding this quote make you feel. Use the pronoun "I" here. The response in this column should be similar to what you write in Poetry Responses—you may make connections to your life, to other works of literature that you have read, songs, etc.</p>



## Example Journal Entry

<p><b>Text:</b> Paul D smiled then, remembering the bedding dress. Sethe was thirteen when she came to Sweet Home and already iron-eyed. She was a timely present for Mrs. Garner who had lost Baby Suggs to her husband's high principles. The five Sweet Home men looked at the new girl and decided to let her be. They were young and so sick with the absence of women they had taken to calves. Yet they let the iron-eyed girl be, so she could choose in spite of the fact that each one would have beaten the others to mush to have her. It took her a year to choose—a long, tough year of thrashing on pallets eaten up with dreams of her. A year of yearning, when rape seemed the solitary gift of life. The restraint they had exercised possible only because they were Sweet Home men—the ones Mr. Garner bragged about while other farmers shook their heads in warning at the phrase.</p> <p>“Y'all got boys,” he told them. “Young boys, old boys, picky boys, stroppin boys. Now at Sweet Home, my niggers is men every one of em. Bought em thataway, raised em thataway. Men every one.” (page 12)</p>	
Critical Analysis:	Response:
<p>This passage uses <u>flashback</u> as Paul D and Sethe reminisce about life back on Sweet Home. Paul D recalls in his mind and the narrator tells us his thoughts when Sethe came to live at Sweet Home. This use of third person omniscient <u>point of view</u> is important for the reader to understand what happens—not only from Paul D's perspective but from Sethe's as well. If we only knew Sethe's thoughts, we would not understand the impact she had when she came to live at Sweet Home. The juxtaposition of these two ideas—the way the slaves at Sweet Home act and their desires—is an interesting manipulation of language by Morrison. It would be easy to see these slaves as “non-human” since she says that they have sex with the calves in the absence of women, but the inclusion of the detail that they practiced “restraint” with Sethe shows that they were men—real men. If they had “raped” her, which would be expected of slaves who used calves for sexual pleasure, then Morrison would validate the myth that slaves were not real men. But to practice “restraint” for one year—indicates that these Sweet Home men were exactly what Mr. Garner bragged about to other slave owners—his slaves were real men. The way Morrison juxtaposes the words “men” and “niggers” is also interesting in what she is doing and the life she creates at Sweet Home.</p>	<p>I find this passage very intriguing. I know this is a slave narrative—and to write about these men as slaves is to be expected. But the way Morrison suggests that they were more than the stereotypical slave is interesting how she does that. I am not sure what is going on—Mr. Garner seems to take pride in his slaves. I know some white slaveholders valued their slaves, but Mr. Garner seems quite different. I am surprised that Morrison, an African-American writer, would make Mr. Garner a decent human being who likes his slaves. If this book is going to be an indictment of slavery and slaveholders, then I am a bit confused here. I really picked up on the word “restraint” in this paragraph. Joseph Conrad admired the “restraint” of the Africans in <i>Heart of Darkness</i> so much. Morrison appears to admire this quality in these characters as well. I think “restraint” is such an important word for the 21<sup>st</sup> century where excess seems to be the norm—not restraint. I love the way Morrison teases us with details and facts about what happened at Sweet Home. I know the name Sweet Home must be ironic—I mean it was a place of enslavement for Baby Suggs and her children, but it seems so nice and pleasant—almost “sweet,” yet the slaves were not free—so how “sweet”? I think Morrison teases us to want to know more than the typical slave narrative here—we want to know the precise details about this place. What made it good, yet what made it a terrible place also. I am intrigued by Baby Suggs' husband's “high principles”—can a slave have “high principles”—and yet I know as soon as I say that—of course he can! I feel at the mercy of Morrison's manipulation of language—and for some reason I like it.</p>