

Worksheet over “Barn Burning” by William Faulkner

1. What three odors does the boy think he smells at the beginning of the story?
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
2. What is the symbol on the sardine can that gives us a first clue to the story’s mythical archetype?
3. At the beginning of the story, Mr. Harris has accused Snopes of what act?
4. In what decade is this story set? How do you know?
5. Sarty Snopes has an inherent contradiction in his character which is reflected by his name. What is the contradiction?
6. How did Sarty react when someone in the crowd hissed a name at his father?
7. How was Abner Snopes wounded in the war?
8. What is the symbol of Mrs. Snopes’ dowry?
9. Why did Abner Snopes strike the gaunt mules that pulled the wagon two savage blows with the peeled willow stick?
10. Why does Abner Snopes make small campfires?
11. Abner tells Sarty, after he strikes him, that “You’ve got to learn to stick to your own blood or you aint’ going to have any blood to stick to you.” What does he mean by this phrase?
12. What words does Faulkner use to describe the sisters?

13. When the boy first sees the de Spain plantation house, how does he feel?
14. What does Abner Snopes step in on the way to the de Spain house?
15. How does Snopes ruin the rug when he is instructed to clean it?
16. What does de Spain set as the price of the ruined rug?
17. What legal action does Snopes take against de Spain?
18. What did the judge rule in the case concerning the damage to the rug?
19. In the afternoon after the second trial, how did Snopes and his two boys spend the afternoon? What do we learn about Snopes' life before his children were born?
20. What does Sarty say in protest to his father's actions the night after the second court appearance?
21. What action of Sarty's puts him at odds with his family?
22. How many shots are fired at the scene of de Spain's burning barn?
23. At midnight, after the de Spain barn fire, where was Sarty?
24. Why did Abner Snopes go to war?
25. In the morning after the fire, which way does Sarty Snopes start walking?

Short essay question. (Write 5 – 10 sentences.) Read the section entitled "Myth in Faulkner's 'Barn Burning'" on page 2225 and explain the archetype attached to Abner Snopes. 10 points.