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Mrs. Whitley

English 11

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The Minister's Black Veil

In the book, "The Minister's Black Veil" by Nathaniel Hawthorne, it describes a clergyman who one day wears a mysterious black veil, up until his death. The story contains two different themes, which are that you always expect the worse, and that everyone has secrets to hide.

In the story, the town suspects that Mr. Hooper has a dark secret which he is hiding. On page 3 it says, "Something must surely be amiss with Mr. Hooper's intellects." (Hawthorne 3) This shows that the town's people are scared that something was wrong with Mr. Hooper. Even the children would run around with a cloth over their faces to scare their friends. The only job people made him do afterwards was officiating funerals. Even his own wife left him, because he refused to take off his dark veil.

One of the most interesting unsolved mysteries was "What was Mr. Hooper hiding?" People were too afraid to ask him why he wore the veil in the first place other than his wife, but he never explained to her its exact purpose. At the end of the story Mr. Hooper was on his deathbed, and a Minister tried remove his veil and said, "With what horrible crime upon your soul are you now passing to the judgment?" (Hawthorne 8) Mr. Hooper then replied by saying that they shouldn't worry about him, and that he should look at those around him and see all of

the sins that their friends and family have done. He says this to point out that every single person has a secret that they don't want anyone else to know about.