

Advanced Placement in
English Literature and Composition

Individual Learning Packet

Teaching Unit

Bless Me, Ultima

by Rudolfo Anaya

written by Bill McMahon

Copyright © 2010 by Prestwick House Inc., P.O. Box 658, Clayton, DE 19938. 1-800-932-4593.
www.prestwickhouse.com Permission to copy this unit for classroom use is extended to purchaser for his or her
personal use. This material, in whole or part, may not be copied for resale.

ISBN 978-1-935465-47-8
Reorder No. 307035

Bless Me, Ultima

Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will:

1. Analyze the novel on three levels
 - a. As a coming of age story.
 - b. As a religious allegory about the conflict between good and evil.
 - c. As a psychological exploration about the effect of culture on identity.
2. Chart the key moments in the story that define the growth of the lead character.
3. Analyze Anaya's development of the major symbols of the novel—such as the owl, the horse and the carp—and their contribution to the novel's theme.
4. Examine the novel's view of the differences and conflicts between men and women in traditional Mexican society.
5. Analyze the novel as an allegory for an individual's internal struggle and growth.
6. Examine each of the major characters as an archetypal figure.
7. Examine the elements of Magical Realism in the novel.
8. Discuss the novel as an example of *bildungsroman*.
9. Respond to multiple-choice items similar to those that will appear on the Advanced Placement in English Literature and Communication exam.
10. Respond to free response items similar to those that will appear on the Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition exam.
11. Offer a close reading of *Bless Me, Ultima* and support all assertions and interpretations with direct evidence from the text, from authoritative critical knowledge of the genre, or from authoritative criticism of the novel.

Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. What is the significance of the family's having left the *Ilano* for Guadalupe? How does the move represent the conflict between Antonio's father and mother?
2. Discuss the horse as symbol, and how it relates to not only Antonio's father, but to all the male characters in the story.
3. How does Ultima reflect the values and realities of the community of which she is a part? How does she stand apart from them?
4. There are many Christian allusions in the novel, along with many references to native Mexican folklore and traditions. Where do these conflict with one another? Do they ever dovetail? What does this tell us about the relationship between Catholicism and folklore?
5. How does Antonio's experience of violence and death form his character?
6. How does the symbol of the Golden Carp echo Antonio's inner religious conflict?
7. What kind of man do you think Antonio will become after the story ends? Will he become a priest, a farmer, or neither? Why?

Introductory Lecture

I—RUDOLFO ANAYA

Rudolfo Anaya was born in 1937 in the small New Mexico village of Pastura. The details of his early life are nearly identical to those of his young protagonist, Antonio, in *Bless Me, Ultima*, and the novel can be seen as autobiographical in many respects. Anaya, like Antonio, was the son of parents from conflicting cultures. His father was a former *vaquero*—a wandering cattle-worker and shepherd, while his mother was from a long line of farmers, devoutly Catholic, and deeply rooted on the land. The 1930s and 1940s was a time of displacement for Mexican Americans; their traditionally self-sufficient agrarian economy was being subsumed by a progressively wage-labor economy, and Anaya's father was forced to become a laborer. The family moved from Pastura to Santa Rosa while Anaya was a small child. This experience is reflected in the sense of displacement, disillusion, and nostalgia intrinsic to the characters of both Antonio's father and mother and in the major theme of the impact of culture on the individual.

In 1954, a swimming accident left young Anaya temporarily paralyzed, and his period of immobility gave him much time to consider philosophical, religious, and cultural questions. This experience is closely paralleled in the novel with the drowning of Florence, Antonio's friend who refuses to believe in God and dies before Antonio can show him the golden carp. The need to be connected to a solid belief system, either religious or pagan or both, is underlined here; both Anaya and Antonio are survivors of near-death experiences, while Florence's lack of connection or belief is seen as a tragic vulnerability.

Anaya was one of ten children, and the importance of family, and their influence on the individual—both positive and negative—was doubtlessly fueled by his relationships with his parents and siblings. The need to learn from each member, but maintain an open, independent, and questioning mind is one of the major themes of *Bless Me, Ultima*, and the major lesson Antonio must learn through the course of the story.

II—*BLESS ME, ULTIMA* AS COMING OF AGE STORY

Bless Me, Ultima can be categorized as a *bildungsroman*—a literary term for a coming-of-age story, in which the protagonist progresses from child to adult. Seen in this light, it can be readily compared to other modern classics such as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Shane*, or *A Tree Grows In Brooklyn*, or for that matter, Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*, or Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. All have young protagonists who experience violence, death, or other misfortune, and whose personalities are forged by those events, prodding each toward adulthood, perhaps prematurely but, nevertheless, with a sense of inevitability.

Antonio has not one, but several experiences of violent death, all of which he closely witnesses and all of which leave him with deep religious, moral, and emotional questions. Each experience, from Lupito's apparent suicide to the killing of Ultima's owl (and by extension, Ultima herself), deepens Antonio's exposure to the dark side of human nature and the cost of hatred and cultural misunderstanding. Each also pushes Antonio further out of his young comfort zone, forcing him constantly to reconsider the nature of God and forgiveness, the relevance of native pagan beliefs, and issues of morality and conscience.

Antonio's journey from childhood to adulthood is also informed by the process of growing up—from his first day of school and the experience of being a cultural outsider among his classmates, through his realization that adults are imperfect, to the increasing strength of his own moral code, which allows him to stand his ground against anyone from classmates to Tenorio. This growth in character is a central feature of the coming-of-age story; the protagonist is formed by experiences into the person he or she is ultimately meant to be. It is significant that Antonio is seven years old at the beginning of the novel—the age that Catholicism defines as the “age of reason,” when a child should be able to understand the difference between right and wrong. Antonio is a reverent young boy, steeped in the Catholic belief system—but his experiences increasingly force him into a deep spiritual conflict, questioning the very nature of God while expecting to be punished for even having such thoughts.

Another important element of *Bless Me, Ultima* as a *bildungsroman*, and a major theme of the novel, is Antonio's identity crisis, fueled by the cultural differences between his mother and father. Unsure of his own nature, and unable to integrate the conflicting influences of his parents, he is caught in the crossfire of their expectations and limitations. This discord is made explicit even in the surnames of his maternal and paternal lines; his father is a Marez, which translates as “sea,” while his mother is a Luna, meaning “moon.” The reference to the sea is meant to reflect the inconstant, restless nature of the “Marez men,” while the Luna line is tied to the cycles of the moon which rule the life of the farmer and link him to the earth. It is up to Antonio to realize his true nature: the sea and the moon are in fact interdependent, two parts of a whole. This is a major metaphor for Antonio forging his own identity borne of both maternal and paternal influences.

III—ALLEGORY, SYMBOL AND METAPHOR

Bless Me, Ultima is rich in its use of allegories, symbols, and metaphors, frequently accessing both Catholic and pagan/folkloric images and tales. While Antonio perceives these differing narratives and beliefs as irreconcilable, Anaya frequently draws parallels between the two. A case in point is the legend of the golden carp, which in its tale of sin being purified by a great flood, consciously echoes the Old Testament story of Noah and the Ark. Thus the two belief systems are shown to be more complementary than conflicting, underlining the theme of cultural integration so central to Antonio's maturation.

Anaya also employs symbols that resonate with both folklore and Christian belief. The golden carp is a prime example: the fish being both a Christian symbol and a traditional pagan icon for fertility and the goodness of the earth and nature. Again, in invoking a single image with resonance in both cultures, and illustrating their common meanings, Anaya treats each tradition as equally sacred, rather than preferring one to the other.

The owl, on the other hand, has mostly pagan associations as a symbol; the significance here is the multiple, often conflicting, associations within a single culture. On a prosaic and stereotypical level, the owl is traditionally seen as a representation of wisdom; Native American myth also conceives of the owl as a protector, as a summoning spirit, or as the reincarnation of the virtuous. Other pagan beliefs, however, connect the owl to witchcraft and the devil, or perceive these nocturnal birds as harbingers of death. Since Ultima's owl is seen as the embodiment of her spirit, the various interpretations of the owl's significance reflect the villagers' conflicting views of Ultima herself. While Antonio and his family understand Ultima as a healer, sage, and protector, others such as Tenorio believe her to be a witch. Anaya uses the symbol to underscore the effect culture has on the individual—in both positive and negative ways.

Animal imagery is prevalent in the novel and forms a motif of its own. There is the horse that Antonio's father must give up, representing the adventurous life of the *vaquero*, which he has abandoned with regret. The black carp, unlike the golden carp, is seen as evil. The hawks that circle after Florence's drowning symbolize death, and the coyotes that howl outside while Ultima cures Antonio's uncle represent malevolence. Aside from their individual meanings, these symbols create a thematic thread that speaks to the relationship between humans and the natural world.

The natural world figures in other kinds of symbols as well: Narciso's "drunken" garden, which has an almost voluptuous feel in the description of its lush bounty of fruits, vegetables, flowers, and herbs and is yet another representation of the intense connection between humans and the earth. The roots and herbs that Ultima gathers on the hills of the *Illano* with their healing and mystical powers, the river with its "presence" that speaks to Antonio of myth, life, danger and sacrifice both work in concert with the other symbols to draw a vivid picture of Antonio's world while each teaches a lesson about how to live in that world.

Allegory and symbolism also play important roles in Antonio's recurring dreams, which chart his journey from innocence to knowledge, and ultimately, acceptance. From his first dream at the beginning, in which he witnesses his own birth and begins to understand the conflicting impulses in his nature, to the nightmare in which he witnesses the destruction of the world, his sleeping world is filled with images that haunt and disturb him, while guiding him on his path.

IV—MAGICAL REALISM

As well as being a coming of age story, *Bless Me, Ultima* is an example of the relatively new literary school of Magical Realism, in which supernatural, magical, or illogical elements appear within an otherwise naturalistic narrative. The term was first applied to twentieth-century Latin American novels such as Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, but it has since been applied the work of novelists worldwide.

The four major characteristics of Magical Realism that are generally agreed upon are

- **Hybridity**—the blending of opposites: Western versus indigenous traditions and beliefs, urban versus rural, masculine versus feminine, etc. The stories usually involve the erosion of borders, change, and a blending of disparate elements. Magical Realism is meant to illuminate a truer, deeper reality than a traditional narrative would yield.
- **Irony of Author's Perspective**—In telling the tale, the author must maintain an ironic distance in the portrayal of the magical elements in order not to compromise the realism. At the same time, he must respect the magical elements, or they will split away from the realism rather than blend with it.
- **Authorial Reticence**—The author does not express an opinion about the accuracy of the magical or supernatural events the narrative depicts; nor does the author make any effort to explain them, thus potentially compromising them in the eyes of the reader.
- **Supernatural and Natural**—The supernatural and the natural are portrayed as coexisting, fully integrated into the world depicted in the narrative.

Bless Me, Ultima clearly displays all these characteristics. In its story of opposing cultures, it plainly exhibits hybridity. In terms of irony of perspective and reticence, Anaya presents every event in the narrative—realistic or supernatural—with no difference in tone or attitude, as if simply reporting. The only commentary apparent in the novel is that made by the characters themselves; at no point does Anaya intrude to make a pronouncement or judgment. Even while the strong identification between the author and Antonio is fairly apparent, Antonio's comments, questions, and beliefs are presented as his own and are frequently countered by those of the other characters. An example is Antonio's father's description of evil as misunderstanding borne of ignorance, which counters Antonio's impression of Tenorio and his daughters as the embodiments of evil. With its many depictions of magic and nature, *Bless Me, Ultima* consistently shows the two as linked, interwoven, and equally credible and relevant to the story.

IV—THE NECESSITY OF MORAL INDEPENDENCE

Antonio's long journey toward independent thinking is his major character arc, the most important lesson he must learn, and it represents one of the major themes of the novel. To achieve his moral independence, he must endure many ordeals and rites of passage. He must experience several occurrences of violence from a harrowingly close perspective, be witness to death and malevolence, endure painful internal conflicts regarding religion, tradition and his own nature, overcome prejudice and ignorance, and find sufficient strength and courage to stand up for his own moral code.

He is only finally able to resolve his many conflicts when he recognizes that it is up to him to construct his own belief system, incorporating all of the apparently contradictory influences, teachings, and experiences into an integrated perspective that is his own, unique to his state of being and personal history.

It is the title character, Ultima, who is Antonio's most important guide, mentor, and role model. An elder, healer, sage, and teacher, she embraces both Catholicism and folkloric beliefs, is spiritually attuned to both the natural and religious world, and uses her outsider status within the village as a source of moral strength. Unlike his mother, who urges Antonio to become a priest, or his father, who wishes him to live the life of the vaquero, it is Ultima who tells Antonio that a man must find his own truth. She lives in harmony with nature and magic, with religion, mysticism and pagan beliefs and is within herself the perfect example of moral independence.

Practice Free Response Items

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 1

Read Antonio's dream of his birth (in italics) in the chapter titled *Uno*, beginning with, "In my dream, I flew over the rolling hills..." and ending, "Only I will know his destiny." Then, write a well-organized essay in which you examine the ways in which the dream expresses both Antonio's internal conflict and the conflicting social forces of the culture the novel portrays.

Avoid plot summary.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 2

Read Chapter 2 (*Dos*) of Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me, Ultima*, paying particular attention to the section in which Antonio witnesses the death of Lupito. Then, write a well-organized essay in which you analyze the moral and religious conflict this experience presents to Antonio.

Do not merely summarize the plot.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 3

Read the selection from approximately midway through Chapter 11 (*Once*) of Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me, Ultima*, starting with the sentence, "It was a beautiful spot. The pond was dark and clear" and ending, "They would say I was crazy, or bewitched by Ultima's magic." Write a well-organized essay in which you analyze the way Anaya uses imagery and symbolism to develop the conflict between Mexican folklore and Catholic belief.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 4

In a novel or play, the protagonist's conflict is an indispensable element to motivate and advance plot. At times, however, in addition to the main character's conflict, the action of the novel or play is governed by a broader, more global conflict that contributes to theme as well. Write a thoughtful and well-reasoned essay in which you analyze the global conflict of Luna versus Marez in Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me Ultima* and how the broader, cultural differences influence the personal, internal conflicts of the young protagonist, Antonia.

Avoid plot summary.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 5

The *bildungsroman*, or coming-of-age story, remains a popular genre of novel. Write a thoughtful and well-organized essay in which you examine Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me Ultima* as the story of Antonio's spiritual/religious coming of age.

Do not merely summarize the plot.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 6

Many of the most interesting characters in novels and plays are neither good nor evil but morally ambiguous. Write a thoughtful and well-organized essay in which you analyze the character of Narciso in Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me Ultima*. Consider the contribution this character's moral ambiguity makes to the overall meaning of the novel.

Avoid plot summary.

Practice Multiple-Choice Items

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 1-5

Read the passage in Chapter 1 (*Uno*) that begins, “In my dream I flew over the hills of the Ilano,” continuing through to the end of the chapter. Then, select the best answers to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. The night before Ultima’s arrival, Antonio has a vivid dream in which he
 - A. is visited by his brothers.
 - B. witnesses his own birth.
 - C. sees the magical golden carp.
 - D. is visited by the *Virgen of Guadalupe*.
 - E. foretells the death of Lupito.
2. The family names Luna and Marez are allusions to the
 - A. relation between man and nature.
 - B. conflict between men and women.
 - C. inconsistency in human nature.
 - D. duality of Antonio’s nature.
 - E. battle between virtue and evil.
3. Antonio’s asking his mother, “But who will hear my confession?” reveals his
 - A. guilt over wanting to be a *vaquero*.
 - B. fear of growing up.
 - C. ambivalence about becoming a priest.
 - D. conflicting ideas about religion.
 - E. reluctance to bear other people’s sins.
4. Antonio’s parents are frequently at odds because of
 - A. their differing backgrounds.
 - B. his mother’s religious devotion.
 - C. the absence of their elder sons.
 - D. his father’s drinking.
 - E. their basic incompatibility.
5. Ultima’s owl is a symbol of all of the following EXCEPT her
 - A. age and wisdom.
 - B. connection to nature.
 - C. spiritual holiness.
 - D. role as Antonio’s protector.
 - E. use of magic.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 6—7

Read the passage in Chapter 2 (*Dos*) beginning with “It was Saturday night. My mother had laid out our clean clothes for Sunday mass,” continuing to the end of the chapter. Then, select best answers to the following multiple-choice questions.

6. The death of Lupito presents Antonio with his first ordeal because Antonio
 - A. thinks his father may be partially responsible.
 - B. cannot reconcile his idea of God with the brutality of life.
 - C. is disturbed by the violence of Lupito’s death.
 - D. feels guilty for sneaking out of the house.
 - E. is wounded and sick from fleeing the scene.

7. The dream Antonio has of his three older brothers illustrates
 - A. the emotional void left by their absence.
 - B. his fear for their safety in battle.
 - C. the conflict between the differing cultures of his parents.
 - D. his longing to live a free life in the Ilano.
 - E. his desire to become a priest.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 8-10

Read the passage in Chapter 3 (*Tres*) that begins with, “My mother took one last cursory glance...” and continues to the end of the following chapter (*Cuatro*). Then, select the best answers to the following multiple-choice questions.

8. Ultima is called a *curandera* because she
 - A. practices witchcraft.
 - B. has healing powers.
 - C. is a wise elder.
 - D. can harness the power of nature.
 - E. is religious.
9. The phrase “the *presence* of the river” refers to
 - A. the symbolic washing away of sin.
 - B. the power of the earth.
 - C. the spell it casts over Antonio.
 - D. spiritual purity.
 - E. nature as supreme being.
10. “God was not forgiving. He made laws to follow and if you broke them you were punished. The Virgin always forgave.” This sentence expresses all of the following EXCEPT
 - A. a crisis of faith.
 - B. the gulf between men and women.
 - C. the conflict between folklore and religion.
 - D. Antonio’s ambivalence about becoming a priest.
 - E. Antonio’s growing identity crisis.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 11-12

Read the passage in Chapter 6 (*Seis*), beginning with, “On the first day of school I awoke with a sick feeling,” and continue to the end of Chapter 7 (*Siete*). Then, select the best answers to the following multiple-choice questions.

11. The primary test of character that Antonio’s experiences during his first day of school is the result of his
 - A. feeling the weight of his mother’s expectations
 - B. speaking no English.
 - C. being an outsider among the other children.
 - D. feeling embarrassed by his lunch.
 - E. being lonely for home.
12. The return of Antonio’s older brothers from the war reignites
 - A. tension between his parents.
 - B. Antonio’s questions about his own identity.
 - C. conflict between the brothers and their parents.
 - D. their adventurous natures.
 - E. Antonio’s innate spirituality.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 13-15

Read the section in Chapter 9 (*Nueve*) that begins with, “‘Samuel,’ I asked, ‘where does the Kid live?’” and ends, “When I got home my mother was very angry with me.” Then answer the following:

13. The story of the struggle of the brown carp to swim upstream is a metaphor for
 - A. human struggle throughout life.
 - B. Antonio’s journey toward self-knowledge.
 - C. the crucifixion.
 - D. Antonio’s need for independence.
 - E. Original Sin.
14. The tale of the golden carp extends this story into the realm of
 - A. allegory.
 - B. magic realism.
 - C. mythology.
 - D. iconography.
 - E. surrealism.
15. The fact that Samuel is both a fisherman and shepherd is a reference to his
 - A. closeness to nature.
 - B. Christ-like character.
 - C. mentoring of Antonio.
 - D. leadership quality.
 - E. purity of heart.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 16-19

Read the passage in Chapter 10 (*Diez*) beginning with, “It was a beautiful morning when the yucca buds were opening...” and continuing through to the end of the chapter. Then answer the following:

16. The story of Lucas’s descent into sickness is a metaphor for
 - A. witchcraft.
 - B. Original Sin.
 - C. conflict with the social order.
 - D. religion.
 - E. the battle between good and evil.
17. Ultima insists Antonio accompany her to help cure Lucas because
 - A. innocence is the ultimate weapon against enchantment.
 - B. his innate spirituality will defeat the dark forces attacking Lucas.
 - C. his conflicted nature must be tamed and resolved.
 - D. he needs instruction in the ways of the *curandera*.
 - E. she needs assistance with the rituals she must perform.
18. The whirlwind, dust devils, and darkening sky on the trip to El Puerto represent examples of pathetic fallacy, in which
 - A. cultural superstitions are debunked.
 - B. Anaya expresses an ironic point of view about culture.
 - C. human emotions and characteristics are given to inanimate objects.
 - D. weather is used as a symbol.
 - E. the subtext of the dialogue between the characters is highlighted.
19. Antonio’s displaying the symptoms of his uncle’s malady indicates his
 - A. empathy.
 - B. innocence.
 - C. connection to the spirit world.
 - D. his priest-like quality.
 - E. spiritual ordeal.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 20-24

Read the passage in Chapter 11 (*Once*) that begins with, “I opened my eyes and peered into the green brush...” and continuing to the end of the chapter. Then, select the best answers the following multiple-choice questions.

20. Narciso’s garden is the metaphorical embodiment of his
 - A. virtue.
 - B. sensuality.
 - C. connection to nature.
 - D. grief over his long dead wife.
 - E. generosity of spirit.
21. The sight of the golden carp awakens Tony to
 - A. a comprehension of the power of nature.
 - B. a deep internal conflict about folklore and religion.
 - C. his own identity crisis.
 - D. his desire for freedom.
 - E. a moral question.
22. Cico’s story of the mermaid’s song is a metaphor for
 - A. his emerging sexuality.
 - B. his imminent death.
 - C. his connection to the river.
 - D. human weakness.
 - E. the duality of human nature.
23. The fable of the prophecy of the golden carp is primarily a(n)
 - A. biblical allusion .
 - B. testament to nature.
 - C. theological conjecture.
 - D. Mexican folktale.
 - E. Christian allegory.
24. Ultima’s appearance in Antonio’s dream points metaphorically toward
 - A. her role as his savior.
 - B. the resolution of his identity crisis.
 - C. the link between folklore and Christian ideology.
 - D. his vocation to become a priest.
 - E. his alienation from both his mother and father.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 25-27

Read the passage in Chapter 12 (*Doce*) that begins with, “Narciso!’ my father exclaimed, ‘What is the matter?’” and continue through to the following chapter, ending with “Yes, I had stood by Ultima.” Then, select the best answers to the following multiple-choice questions.

25. Tenorio’s accusation of witchcraft against Ultima reveals all of the following EXCEPT
- A. true evil does not recognize itself.
 - B. virtue is often misunderstood.
 - C. impending catastrophe is waiting for Tenorio.
 - D. that he is psychologically projecting his own guilt onto Ultima.
 - E. the conflict between Christian dogma and Chicano culture.
26. The primary purpose of the owl’s partial blinding of Tenorio is to
- A. be an example of irony.
 - B. symbolize his spiritual blindness.
 - C. serve as another Biblical allusion.
 - D. illustrate the power of good over evil.
 - E. connect Ultima to nature.
27. What does Antonio’s questioning his uncle about his failure to warn Ultima reveal about Antonio?
- A. He is progressing toward independent thought.
 - B. He needs to resolve his questions about religion.
 - C. He is conflicted by inner turmoil.
 - D. He has lost his moral center.
 - E. He is struggling to find forgiveness in his heart.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 28-31

Read the passage in Chapter 14 (*Catorce*) beginning with, “We reached the tumultuous playground,” and continue through to the end of the chapter. Then, select the best answers the following multiple-choice questions.

28. Antonio’s defense of Ultima against Ernie’s accusations of witchcraft shows
- A. his profound innocence.
 - B. his devout faith.
 - C. the growing strength of his moral principles.
 - D. the depth of his devotion to Ultima.
 - E. the part of his nature that favors his Father.
29. What is the primary effect of Andrew’s failure to warn Ultima?
- A. It awakens Antonio to the fact that adults are flawed.
 - B. It further alienates Antonio from the world of his father.
 - C. It disturbs Antonio because of the erotic pull of Rosie’s house.
 - D. It propels Antonio to follow Narciso.
 - E. It compels Antonio to question the nature of God.
30. The primary purpose of Tenorio’s murder of Narciso is to
- A. illustrate the battle between good and evil.
 - B. further confuse Antonio about the power of God.
 - C. push Antonio into the role of priest and confessor.
 - D. show Antonio the evil inherent in vengeance.
 - E. serve as a metaphor for sacrifice.
31. Antonio’s dream of God and the Virgin is significant because it
- A. crystallizes his fear of divine retribution.
 - B. demonstrates the necessity of forgiveness.
 - C. is a metaphor for the conflict between male and female.
 - D. foreshadows the fate of Ultima.
 - E. fulfills the prophecy of the golden carp.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 32-33

Read the passage in Chapter 17 (*Diecisieste*) that begins with, “I sat on the hard wooden pew and shivered,” and ends, “I felt sorry for him, and I felt bad that he had been punished, while I had been excused...” Then, select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

32. The story of the Ilano that Antonio’s father tells him at the beginning of this passage serves to
- A. advance theme.
 - B. provide exposition
 - C. develop character.
 - D. suggest an allusion.
 - E. suggest a symbol.
33. Florence is an important figure in the story because
- A. his antics provide comic relief.
 - B. he is a Christ-like figure.
 - C. he reflects and magnifies Antonio’s own religious doubts.
 - D. he challenges Antonio’s belief system.
 - E. he is Antonio’s closest confidante’.

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 34-35

Read the passage in Chapter 21 (*Veintiuno*) that begins, “We made our way up the creek...” and continuing through to the following chapter, ending with “I heard the sound of a siren somewhere...” Then, select the best answers to the following multiple-choice questions.

34. The primary purpose of Florence’s death from drowning is to
- A. serve as a metaphor for sacrifice.
 - B. suggest an allegory.
 - C. symbolize the danger of non-belief.
 - D. underscore Antonio’s crisis of faith.
 - E. mythologize Florence as a rebel.
35. Ultima’s final lesson for Antonio is
- A. the importance of faith.
 - B. the need for harmony between man and nature.
 - C. that one must take strength from life’s difficulties.
 - D. that one must think independently.
 - E. that Christianity and folklore can be reconciled.

MULTIPLE CHOICE ANSWERS WITH EXPLANATIONS

1. (A), (C), (D) all occur in later dreams but not in this dream. (E) is totally false, Lupito's death is never foretold; it is Antonio's first experience of violence. **The correct answer is (B)—Antonio's first dream in the novel is a vision of his own birth, in which Ultima appears as both midwife and protector, and his father's and mother's families quarrel for possession of Antonio's destiny.**
2. (A) and (E) are tempting in that both are dichotomies explored in the book, but they are not the *best* applications of the family conflict. Likewise, (B) and (C) are themes, but neither is the explored here. **The best answer is clearly (D), the duality of Antonio's nature. Marez means *sea*; Luna of course means *moon*, and this reference sets up both the identity crisis and spiritual conflict that is the major story arc of the novel.**
3. (A) is eliminated by the fact that Antonio never expresses a desire to become a *vaquero*. (B) is irrelevant in this instance since Antonio is not exhibiting a desire to remain a child. Although both (D) and (E) could be perceived as part of that same truth, **the correct answer is (C) since this is a major moment of character development for Antonio. This line represents the first moment that Antonio indicates he might not want to follow the path his mother wants for him.**
4. While (B), (C), and (D) all are factors in the relationship of Antonio's parents, they are *symptoms* of the parents' discontent, rather than the sources. (E) is actually correct but is too general to satisfy. **The correct answer is (A). Antonio's mother is from the farming culture, deep-rooted and connected to home. His father, on the other hand, comes from the *vaquero* (cowboy) culture and longs for the freedom of roaming the llano on horseback.**
5. (A), (B), (C), and (D) are all true. The correct answer is (E), her use of magic. The owl is a key symbol, and represents all the most important layers of Ultima's character. For Antonio, she is protector, elder and mentor, spiritual guide and is constantly illustrating to him the importance of respecting and connecting to nature. Her use of magic, however, is not relevant to the symbol of the owl.
6. While (A), (C), (D) and (E) are all relevant, none of them expresses the major point being made here. (B) is the correct answer. **Lupito's death presents Antonio with his first spiritual doubts about the power of God, leaving him with deep questions about good and evil, justice and morality.**
7. (A) and (B) may be true, but they are not the major metaphor here. (D) is untrue because Antonio never voices a deep desire to wander the llano, and (E) is simply not relevant. **The correct answer is (C), the conflict between the *vaquero* (cowboy) culture of his father and the farm culture of his mother. This is a major motif throughout the novel, reflecting the deep identity crisis that Antonio must resolve.**

8. While (A), (C), (D), and (E) are all aspects of Ultima's character, they do not express the true meaning of the word *curandera*. **The answer is (B). A *curandera* is essentially a healer, both for physical and spiritual ailments.**
9. (B) and (E) are all related to the metaphor of the river but are not the major story point here. Neither (A) nor (D) is especially relevant. **The correct answer is (C). The central and most important meaning to the story is the effect the river has on Antonio.**
10. (A), (B), (C) and (D) are all true. **The correct answer is (E). The major thrust here is Antonio's conflicting impressions about religion and faith, not his identity crisis.**
11. Although all of the answers listed are true, **the correct answer is (C) since it is the most definitive and encompassing. Antonio's biggest hurdle is his outsider status as he comes into the different culture of the school and its students.**
12. (E) is not especially relevant here. While (A), (C), and (D) are true to a lesser degree, **the correct answer is (B). The major theme here is Antonio's growth toward adulthood, and the questions his brothers' return raises.**
13. (B), (C), (D) and (E) are all completely irrelevant. **The correct answer is (A); the story of the brown carp serves as a metaphor for human struggle.**
14. (B) is eliminated because a mere allusion to a local superstition is not enough, in and of itself, to bring the book into the realm of Magical Realism. Similarly, (C) is tempting, but allusion to a myth does not necessarily make the entire story a myth. There is no suggestion in the passage that the golden carp, while it might become a symbol, is going to emerge as an icon (D). (E) is eliminated for reasons similar to (B), one potentially surreal element does not render the entire passage surreal. **The correct answer is (A). The story of the golden carp echoes other references to sin and redemption and extends the story into the realm of a religious allegory.**
15. (A) and (D) are tempting but are, ultimately, too general. There is no essential connection between Samuel's two occupations and his mentoring of Antonio (C). (E) is tempting only if one already assumes the meaning of the true allusion to Jesus, referred to as both "the Good Shepherd" and "the Fisher of Men." **The correct answer is, therefore, (B). Samuel, while showing a strong connection to nature and folklore, is also presented as a Christ figure. This is one of the ways Anaya draws an analogy between Mexican folklore and Christian belief.**
16. (A) and (D) might tempt some but are ultimately too general when compared to the other choices. (B), on the other hand, is too specific and misses the mark. (C) ignores the fact that Lucas's illness triggers a spiritual conflict more than a social one. **Thus, (E) is the best answer, the battle between good and evil, both in the social order**

17. This is a tricky one. (C) is the only plainly incorrect answer; Ultima knows that one experience is not going to resolve Antonio's conflicted nature. While (B), (D) and (E) are true to a degree, **the best answer is in fact (A). The major reason Ultima brings Antonio along is his profound innocence, which is a light against the dark forces attacking his uncle.**
18. Selection of the correct answer depends, quite simply, on the student's knowing that a **pathetic fallacy** is (C) a device in which inanimate objects or occurrences (frequently having to do with climate and weather) reflect the emotional content of the scene. This device is used by Anaya several times in the novel.
19. The challenge of this question is that all of the answers are plausible, but (E) is the most specific and inclusive. Antonio's ordeal—and how it will spur him on in his quest for spiritual truth—is the major point of the scene.
20. Again, the choice here is which is the most *relevant* answer. Only (D) is not relevant; (B), (C) and (E) all apply but are not the biggest point being made. **The correct answer here is (A). Narciso, a sometime drunk, nevertheless is presented as a largely virtuous, if imperfect, man. The lushness and beauty of his garden represents his righteous side and generosity of spirit.**
21. (A) is tempting but misses the mark that the golden carp awakens in Antonio the key conflict of his development. (C) is, perhaps, more tempting because it does point to an internal conflict but is, ultimately, too general. (D) is irrelevant, and (E) is far too general. **Only (B) remains as the best choice. The salient point of the golden carp story is the questions that it awakens within Antonio about the power of folklore versus the Christian ideology he has cherished up to this point.**
22. (A) is incorrect, as sexuality is not being referenced here, at least not as it relates to Cico. (B) is incorrect, as it is Florence who later dies in the river. Both (C) and (D) are beside the point. **The correct answer is (E). The mermaid's song relates to the internal battle within everyone between self-control and reckless abandon.**
23. All answers are applicable, but (B) is too general and misses the Christianity-folklore dichotomy. By contrast, (D) and (E) are too specific and also miss the dichotomy. (C) misses the mark completely. **The most relevant choice is (A). The fable of the prophecy of the golden carp, in referencing the story of Noah and the flood, draws a parallel between Biblical parables and folklore.**
24. (A) is eliminated by the fact that Ultima's role is literal, not metaphorical. (C) misrepresents the conflict that Antonio has not yet resolved, and (D) is not yet established. (E) is an inaccurate assessment of Antonio's relationship with his parents. **The correct answer is (B). "The Waters are one, Antonio. I looked into her bright, clear eyes and understood her truth." This is the first indication to Antonio that he can reconcile both sides of his character into a whole human being.**

25. (A), (B), (C), and (D) all apply to the accusation of witchcraft. What does not belong here is (E)—**the conflict between Christian dogma and Chicano culture is not being expressed at this point.**
26. (A) is incorrect; there is no particular instance of irony in this section. (B) is tempting but not the full story. There is no biblical allusion (C) in either the owl or the blinding. As the owl is not a representative of nature, (E) is eliminated. **The correct answer is (D). Tenorio's accusation of witchcraft against Ultima is the climactic battle between good and evil in the novel and, as such, is significant on all levels of the story—textual, sub-textual, and thematic.**
27. While all the answers have a basis in fact, **Antonio's questioning of his uncle primarily shows his growth from pure innocence toward adulthood and a mind of his own. Therefore, (A) is the correct answer.**
28. (A) is eliminated by the fact that the reader, too, has been led to realize that Ultima is not a witch. Antonio's defense of a "witch" would demonstrate almost the opposite of (B). (D) is tempting, but not the best choice, and (E) misses the mark since there is not essential connection between the Mares line and Ultima's healing. **The correct answer therefore is (C). Antonio's defense of Ultima is another step in his progression toward becoming an adult with a well-defined moral code.**
29. (A) and (C) are relevant to the moment but not the most salient points. (B) is a misread of what it would mean to be a Mares. (E) is a temptation, but again, not the major purpose of this episode. **The correct answer is (D). Antonio witnessing Andrew's refusal is a plot device that propels him to follow Narciso and be certain Ultima is warned about Tenorio. In addition to being a plot device, however, this moment underscores Antonio's growth toward independent decisions and thought.**
30. (E) is not relevant to this moment. While (A), (C) and (D) apply, **the major point is the effect on Antonio of witnessing violence yet again. The correct answer is (B).**
31. (A) is not the major thrust of this dream, and (E) is simply beside the point. A case can be made for both (C) and (D), but **the true answer is (B). The central point of the dream is to teach Antonio the principle of forgiveness, which has been the biggest obstacle to his reconciliation of Christian belief and the brutality he has witnessed.**
32. (B) is true but not the major point. Similarly, (C) and (E) are not the main thrust of the story, and (D) is not relevant. **The correct answer is (A). His father's story comes right after mention of the atomic bomb testing that was done nearby, and is meant as a lesson to Antonio about the perils of exploiting the natural world and the need to live in harmony with it.**

33. (A) is incorrect; Florence is not a particularly comical character. While compelling and from a certain standpoint a sacrificial character, Florence is less Christ-like than Samuel and more of a role model to Antonio as an independent thinker, so (B) is incorrect. (D) is not true, as Florence does not actively challenge Antonio so much as simply present a different belief system. (E) is incorrect, as Florence does not function particularly as confidante to Antonio; their relationship is more the reverse. **The correct answer is (C). A professed non-believer, yet strong in his convictions and resolve, Florence presents a challenge to Antonio's Catholic belief system.**
34. (A), (B) and (C) all misstate the point of Florence's death. (E) may be true, but it is not the point here. **The correct answer is (D). Unlike the story of the golden carp, Florence's death functions not as metaphor or allegory, but yet another trial for Antonio and his faith.**
35. While every answer here represents a major theme or motif in the novel, **the correct answer is (D). The most important lesson Antonio learns in the course of the story is the need to be an independent thinker, a fully integrated human being at peace with oneself and with the ability to reconcile the conflicts and contradictions of life, faith and nature.**

Bless Me, Ultima

CHAPTER ONE (Uno)

1. How does Ultima come to be a part of the Marez family?

Antonio's mother and father have agreed it is both a duty and an honor to give Ultima a place in their home. Ultima is a deeply respected elder in the community, and a healer who has performed midwife duty for Antonio's mother each time she has given birth.

2. Why does the family address Ultima with the title *La Grande*?

It is the title of respect. It indicates the reverence in the culture for a matriarchal elder.

3. What is a *curandera*?

A curandera is a female healer, both for physical and spiritual maladies.

4. What does Antonio's first dream portray, and what does it foreshadow?

Antonio has a vision of his own birth. His father's and mother's relatives battle over his soul, arguing over whether he should follow the life of a farmer or of a vaquero, setting up his identity crisis. Ultima silences them, saying only she will know his destiny.

5. What is the major source of conflict for Antonio's mother and father?

Each of them is from a different culture, and both of them are separated from their birthplaces. Antonio's father, Gabriel, comes from the Ilano, a beautiful but desolate land, where he was a vaquero and never tied down to one place. Antonio's mother, Maria, however, is from the farming community El Puerto and longs for the deep-rooted, agrarian life that her brothers live.

6. What effect does this conflict have on Antonio?

It fuels his identity crisis; he is unsure whether his nature is that of the wanderer, like the Marez line, or a farmer like the Luna line of his mother.

7. What adds to Antonio's inner turmoil?

His mother longs for him to become a priest; his spiritual questions and doubts make him unsure whether this is the path for him.

8. Why does Ultima allow Antonio to call her by her Christian name and not the title *La Grande*?

There is, from the first, a special bond between Ultima and Antonio; she seems to understand and identify with both his innocence and his quest for knowledge.

CHAPTER TWO (*Dos*)

1. What is the major event in this chapter. Why is it important to Antonio's inner journey?

Antonio has his first experience of violence by witnessing the death of Lupito. It leaves him with deep spiritual questions about the power of God.

2. Explain the moral ambiguity of Lupito's death.

Lupito is psychologically disturbed from his experiences in World War II. He is portrayed as delusional and not responsible for his actions. Nevertheless, the code of the men in the town calls for his execution for killing Chavez's brother.

3. What does Narciso's attempted intervention say about the character of the community?

Narciso, ridiculed by the others for his drinking, tries to speak to Lupito and reason with him. The scoffing response and ultimate shooting betray the limitations imposed on the others by their cultural prejudices.

4. Describe how Ultima shows her powers of healing, both physically and spiritually.

She gives Antonio an herbal potion to help him sleep. But more than that, she tries to guide him toward serenity by answering his question about whether Lupito's soul will go to hell with the statement "That is not for us to say." She reassures him that "Men will do what men will do," thus guiding him toward an acceptance of adult life and its contradictions.

CHAPTER THREE (*Tres*)

1. Is Antonio cured by Ultima's ministrations?

Antonio's external wounds are nearly healed, as if by magic. But he continues to brood over the condition of Lupito's soul, and what it means about the true nature of God.

2. What is the cause of the Sunday morning arguments between Maria and Gabriel?

There are two causes—Gabriel's drinking, and his animosity toward religion. Maria's devotion is deeply provoked by this, as Gabriel frequently mocks priests when he has been drinking.

3. Why does Maria's comment, "What a sin it is for boy to grow into a man" disturb Antonio?

This comment sets up yet another internal conflict for Antonio, between his desire to be holy and devout, and his desire for learning and knowledge.

4. How does Anaya escalate Antonio's unease over the death of Lupito, and what it means?

His father's clothes smell of gunpowder from the event of the previous night. Antonio muses, "They say the devil smells of sulfur," highlighting his anguish over the moral implications of Lupito's death.

5. Are his anxieties addressed in this chapter, and how?

Ultima tells him that a man of the Ilano will not take a life unless there is just cause. She also tells him that she does not believe Gabriel actually fired his weapon at Lupito. She also tells him that he must never judge God for who is forgiven and who is not.

6. How does Antonio earn the respect of the boys from town before they go into mass?

Anticipating the tricks of the roughneck known as The Horse, he eludes being thrown down by him and actually succeeds in throwing Horse down instead. He also refuses a handshake, as he knows this is another trick to throw him.

7. How is this significant in a metaphorical way?

The Horse is described as indeed a horse-like creature, wild and untamed. Thus he is linked to the unrestrained male world symbolized by Gabriel's horse; in taming and keeping The Horse at bay, Antonio is taming his own wilder nature.

CHAPTER FOUR (*Cuatro*)

1. How does Anaya show Ultima in her role as teacher/mentor to Antonio?

While gathering herbs, plants, and fruit as they wander the hills of the Ilano, she teaches Antonio their use and significance. She also exemplifies the ideal relation between humans and nature.

2. What does Antonio sense in the stillness of the Ilano that frightens and mystifies him?

He senses what Ultima describes as the presence of the river—a personification of the mystical power of nature.

3. Describe how this is an example of the technique of pathetic fallacy, and how it contributes to the story.

Anaya uses this technique, in which human traits and emotions are assigned to inanimate objects, to underline the theme of the connection between humans and nature. In treating the river as a character in the story, the author also amplifies the sense of enchantment, mysticism, and strange beauty that typifies Antonio's world.

4. What is the significance of the statue of the Virgen de Guadalupe?

The Virgen is the personification of the virtues of faith, devotion and forgiveness, and the embodiment of the ideals espoused by Antonio's mother—who shares the name Maria with the Virgen.

5. How does the persona of the Virgen differ from God in Antonio's mind, and what does this portend?

He perceives the Virgen as always forgiving, while God appears powerful, but unyielding and vengeful. Antonio's perceptions fuel his spiritual doubts and internal conflict over the nature, power, and limitations of all gods, both sacred and profane, and whether it is even proper to question God.

CHAPTER FIVE (Cinco)

1. Why does the family, except Gabriel, go to El Puerto?

They go to visit Maria's brothers and help with the harvest.

2. What do we learn about the history of the Lunas?

Many years earlier, the Lunas were among the first to settle the village. They are, therefore, significant in the community.

3. Describe the emotional tone of the visit to El Puerto, and what it says about the characters.

It is a happy time, especially for Maria, who has the chance to reconnect with her family and her roots. The harvest is abundant. This underscores the temperament of the Luna family, which lives for the earth and is contented to stay in one place for generations.

4. How does Uncle Juan perceive Antonio?

He says to Maria, "In that one there is hope," signaling that Antonio, unlike his older brothers, favors the Luna line. It points to Antonio being more grounded, less of a wandering Marez, and implies that he is more likely to become a farmer or priest.

CHAPTER SIX (*Seis*)

1. Tony's first day of school presents him with what challenge?

He speaks little English and, not knowing their customs and culture, is an outsider among the other children from town.

2. Who are his guides when he first gets to the school?

An older boy named Red, who leads him to the correct class room, and Miss Maestas, who has taught Antonio's siblings.

3. What is Antonio's first lesson, and what does it signify?

He learns to write his name. This represents not only the beginning of his English language education, but the beginning of his forming a separate identity in the wider world he is learning to be a part of.

4. Why is Antonio embarrassed by the Mexican lunch his mother has made for him, and why is this significant?

The other children all have American style sandwiches and even make fun of Antonio's food. This illustrates how he has been thrust into a completely new culture, and just how much of an outsider he is at the school.

5. How does Antonio cope?

He bonds with George and Willy, two farm boys who are also outsiders in the Anglicized world of the school.

CHAPTER SEVEN (*Siete*)

1. What does Antonio's dream of his brothers' returning from war signify?

The dream suggests that, while the brothers have returned safe and unharmed physically, the war has had profound psychological effects on them.

2. How is this communicated?

In the dream, the brothers refer to themselves as "dying giants" who have seen the land of the golden carp.

CHAPTER EIGHT (Ocho)

1. How is each of the brothers characterized? In what ways is their role in the novel similar to the chorus in a Greek tragedy?

The brothers' characters are delineated in broad terms. Gene is a loner, remote and reclusive about his feelings. Leon is more outgoing; both he and Gene are restless, with a strong desire to leave home. Andrew is closer to his mother's temperament and is more concerned with how she may be affected by their actions. Nevertheless, as characters, they more often than not work in concert with one another, almost as if becoming a single character, and a foil for Antonio.

2. What future plot event seems likely at the end of the chapter? What suggests this?

It seems inevitable that the brothers will leave home. This is made clear when Gene states that they are men, not boys, and can't be tied down to the "old dreams" of their parents.

3. How is the difference between Antonio's character and his brothers' made clear?

Antonio responds to their teasing by blessing them; later, when they leave for Rosie's, he still wants to bless them.

CHAPTER NINE (Nueve)

1. What does Antonio's dream at the beginning of the chapter indicate?

The dream signifies Antonio's rite of passage, and his internal conflict over growth and knowledge versus protecting his innocence.

2. How is this shown?

At the beginning, Antonio dreams that his brothers are trying to lure him into Rosie's. He feels the conflicting impulses of sexual curiosity and the conviction that he must remain innocent to be worthy of the priesthood.

3. How are Maria and Gabriel united in the scene following the dream?

They are both grieved over the departure of their sons, and even Gabriel seems to regret the restlessness of the Marez men.

4. What is a source of consolation for Antonio and his parents?

The following morning, Andrew decides to stay behind while Leon and Gene depart.

5. What decision does Antonio make that indicates he is growing toward independence?

Instead of going straight home from school as usual, he goes fishing with Samuel.

6. Why doesn't Samuel fish for carp?

Samuel believes it is bad luck, telling Antonio a legend that the carp are actually enchanted people who were turned into fish by an angry god. To eat one is to risk being turned into a carp oneself.

7. What challenge does the legend of the golden carp present to Antonio? What theme does this challenge reinforce?

Antonio is compelled by the story of the golden carp, but the idea of its being a god conflicts with his understanding of Catholic ideology. This episode reinforces the theme of cultural clashes between Christianity and traditional Mexican folklore.

CHAPTER TEN (Diez)

1. Why is the trip with Ultima, to help cure his uncle, a turning point for Antonio?

Ultima brings Antonio with her as her helper; it is apparent that his strength and virtue will be tested by the experience. While he knows that malevolence and danger will be part of that experience, he does not shrink from it.

2. How does the novel reveal itself as an example of Magical Realism here?

The depiction of the spell cast on the uncle, and Ultima's use of magic to cure it, invades the naturalism of the story with supernatural elements. Enchantment and a strong belief in the Devil as an active force in the world, major elements of Magical Realism, figure prominently here.

3. What is underlined by the introduction of Magical Realism?

Anaya's introduction of Magical Realism illustrates how Catholicism and cultural folklore have blended and fused into a single belief system for many of the characters, such as Ultima and Maria.

4. How is Antonio's experience of his uncle's cure both an ordeal and a rite of passage?

During Ultima's ritual, Antonio seems to take on his uncle's illness and experience it himself. In the process, he seems to become an intrinsic part of Lucas's release from the spell, and he has his closest experience of evil—strengthening his ability to confront it.

5. How is Ultima's power as a *curandera* perceived by the people of the town, after Lucas' cure?

Some revere her as a holy woman, while at least one calls her a "bruja", a witch.

6. What might this ambivalence foreshadow?

The townspeople's mixed reaction to Ultima shows the impact of culture on identity and belief. For some, culture brings a widening vision and greater understanding. For others, it brings a narrowing of mind and heart. It foreshadows the accusation of witchcraft which Tenorio will make against Ultima.

CHAPTER ELEVEN (*Once*)

1. What does Cico's insisting that Antonio take an oath before showing him the golden carp indicate?

Cico makes Antonio swear that he will never hunt or kill a carp. Since Antonio is a Catholic, Cico sees him as a "non-believer" in the godlike status of the golden carp. This shows that Cico is just as devout in his way as Antonio is in his.

2. What does the description of Narciso's garden tell us?

It tells us that Narciso, like Ultima, is magical in the way he is connected to earth and nature.

3. In what way does Antonio stand apart from the boys he and Cico run into before going to the river?

The other boys reflect the limitations and prejudices of their culture and do not have Antonio's connection to spirituality and nature. Some actually ask whether Ultima is a bruja, and mock Antonio by asking him to "do magic." It is significant that Cico only tells Antonio about the golden carp, and of the other boys; only Samuel also knows about it.

4. How is the appearance of the golden carp revelatory to Antonio? What does it amplify for him?

Seeing the golden carp gives Antonio the kind of moment he expects to have when he makes his First Communion. He compares the powerful experience of seeing the pagan god with Ultima's cure of his uncle, and he wonders whether he has sinned by even having these thoughts. He thus looks forward to his First Communion with even more anticipation and with the heightened expectation that it will answer his questions and quell his doubts.

5. Why is the golden carp safe from fishermen? Why is that significant?

Cico explains that the golden carp is invisible to all adults except Ultima and Narciso, and all children except himself, Antonio, and Samuel. It is inferred that only those with a deep connection to spirituality and nature can see the golden carp.

6. What Christian belief does the prophecy of the golden carp parallel?

The prophecy of the golden carp echoes the Christian belief in the Second Coming, of Christ's returning to earth on Judgment Day, when all sins will be revealed and punished and virtue rewarded.

7. Why is the fact that the town is surrounded by water important, both as Christian metaphor and according to native folklore?

In Christian ideology, water represents baptism—cleansing and purity. The prophecy of the golden carp is that the town, which was once completely underwater, will one day be taken back by the water—cleansed of the sins of the people, and once again ruled over by the golden carp, just as Christians believe that Christ will one day return to earth on Judgment Day. On the level of folklore, the closeness of the town to water also speaks to the connection between nature and daily life.

8. What key statement does Ultima make when Antonio asks her whether he is to believe in the legend of the golden carp?

She tells him that, as he grows into manhood, he must find his own truths.

9. What does Antonio's dream that night signify?

In the dream, Antonio's parents argue over what water Antonio was baptized in—the waters of the moon, blessed by the Holy Mother of the Church, or the salt water of the sea. Ultima tells him that "the waters are one," because the water of the moon falls into the river and flows into the sea. This underscores Antonio's need to unify the two conflicting aspects of his own character into a whole, unified adult persona.

CHAPTER TWELVE (Doce)

1. What does the scapular that Ultima gives to Antonio symbolize?

The sacramental necklace is meant to protect him from evil. It is filled with herbs and symbolizes both the power of Christian belief and the power of nature.

2. What is revealed by the visitors from Las Pasturas?

Antonio learns the history of his father's people, how they suffered through their travels through Texas and Colorado, how the cowboy life they loved was disrupted by the railroad, and how they ultimately became migrant workers. Is there a "so what" here somewhere? It's one of the few times we get any hints of the social backstory for these folk. It's left pretty sketchy overall.

3. How is Tenorio's accusation of witchcraft against Ultima ironic?

Tenorio believes Ultima has killed one of his daughters with witchcraft. Conversely, Ultima maintains that it is Tenorio's sisters who have been casting black spells.

4. How does Narciso defuse the situation?

Narciso proposes that Ultima be tested for witchcraft by having her pass under a doorway that has been posted with a cross made of holy needles.

5. What is the metaphorical significance of Tenorio's being blinded by the owl?

Tenorio's blinding stands for his limited vision, prejudice, and lack of understanding. It also echoes the Christian parable about the man who sees the splinter in another's eye, but cannot see the beam inside his own.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN (Trece)

1. What fuels Antonio's inner struggle about religion in this chapter?

He wonders why the parables of both God and the golden carp make them out to be punishing and vengeful, while the Virgin is seen as ultimately forgiving. He is unable to reconcile the concepts of damnation and salvation and the roles of the various deities in the disposition of human souls.

2. What does Antonio reveal about himself when he finally gets his uncle to admit his cowardice?

Antonio reveals that he has developed his own sense of integrity, as well as the courage to stand up to his uncle. It is a big step on his journey to adulthood.

3. What does the Marez family's characterization of Tenorio and his sisters suggest? How is their suspicion about Tenorio ironic?

The Marez family believes that Tenorio and his sisters celebrate the black mass and worship the devil. This indicates that even those who are regarded as "virtuous" are governed by and limited by their superstitious prejudices. The irony is that both sides of the disagreement make the same accusation against the other.

4. How does the rumor about Tenorio and his sisters advance the plot? What events are likely to develop?

Because of the rumors of witchcraft, the priest refuses to let Tenorio bury his sister in the consecrated ground of the churchyard. This further marginalizes Tenorio within the village and adds more fuel to his rage against Ultima. It is probable that Tenorio will at least attempt some kind of revenge.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN (*Catorce*)

1. What theme does Samuel's warning to Antonio emphasize?

Samuel warns Antonio that he must be careful around the other children at school because they will not understand Ultima's cure of his uncle and may think Tenorio's accusation of witchcraft is true. Once again, this echoes the theme of the effect of cultural beliefs and superstitions on both society and the individual.

2. What else in the chapter underlines this theme?

Ernie and the other boys at the schoolyard tease Antonio about having a witch in his house.

3. What does Antonio's defense of Ultima reveal about how he is growing?

He defends Ultima against Ernie, calling him a liar and even getting into a fight. He reveals that he is thinking more independently, forming his own code of behavior, and he has the strength and will to abide by that code.

4. How is Ultima's warning to Antonio about "the evil in the wind" ambiguous? What does it portend?

On the surface, it sounds as if she is telling him to be careful of the hostile weather, but she is really telling him there is danger waiting for him and telling him to be ready to meet it.

5. What does the school play illuminate about Antonio's schoolmates. How does it function in the story?

Because many of the girls have stayed home that day, several of the boys are pressed to play the female parts. As a result, the play becomes a comic, raucous mess. This furnishes some comic relief at a tense point in the story.

6. What is the major event of this chapter?

On the way home from school, Antonio witnesses a bloody fight between Narciso and Tenorio. The men are fighting over Ultima. After the fight, Narciso goes to Rosie's to find Andrew and urge him to return home to warn the family and Ultima.

7. What does Antonio learn?

When Andrew fails to take Narciso's warning seriously and instead stays with the whores at Rosie's, Antonio has his first important experience of the weaknesses of the men in his family.

8. What is the climax of the chapter. How does it affect Antonio?

Tenorio ambushes Narciso, shooting and killing him. As he dies, he asks Antonio to hear his confession, pressing him into the role of priest.

9. Does Antonio's dream point to any resolution of his spiritual crisis? Why or why not?

In the dream, God challenges Antonio to ask forgiveness for both Narciso and Tenorio; Antonio cannot grasp why forgiveness rather than punishment should be extended to the wicked. Enraged, God forces Antonio to witness the destruction of his family and village, and the fulfillment of the prophecy of the golden carp. Antonio is still left with deep questions about the nature of God, the significance of the golden carp, and the meaning of sin and forgiveness.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (Quince)

1. What is unspoken, but apparent, between Antonio and his brother Andrew at the beginning of the chapter?

It is apparent that Andrew knows Antonio saw him at Rosie's the night before. He is ashamed.

2. What does Antonio's approaching First Communion signify for him?

Of course, the receipt of his First Communion will be a rite of passage for Antonio, a milestone in his journey to adulthood. As his mother insists that his First Communion will help him to know God, he also hopes that it will help him to resolve some of the spiritual questions with which he has been dealing.

3. What clue reveals that Leon and Gene have returned to the family because of a misadventure? What does the misadventure say about their characters?

Leon and Gene are driven home by the state police. While stranded in a snowstorm, they burned the blankets, seats, gas, and tires of their vehicle to stay warm. They fell asleep and woke to find the entire car aflame. The episode shows how reckless they have been in their quest for adventure, and the futility of a life lived simply for earthly sensation.

4. How does Gabriel reveal the effect of his sons' return?

Because he knows that they will probably leave again, his initial joy at seeing them is short lived. He begins to drink heavily, goes alone into the extreme cold to repair the windmill, and works without asking for the help of his sons.

5. What does Antonio wonder when Andrew leaves with Leon and Gene? What is the implication of Antonio's thoughts?

Antonio wonders whether Narciso's death has anything to do with Andrew's deciding leave. The implication is that Andrew's motivation to leave may be his shame at having been discovered at Rosie's by his younger brother.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN (*Dieciseis*)

1. What strengthens Antonio's resolve when he stands up to Tenorio?

Antonio remembers that his father, Narciso, and Ultima all stood up to Tenorio; the thought helps give him the strength to tell Tenorio that he will protect Ultima against him.

2. Why is Ultima unconcerned about Tenorio's threats?

She says that Tenorio hasn't the strength or courage to carry them out; she compares Tenorio to an old wolf whose conscience will not let him rest, forcing him to drag along the ground where he made his kill.

3. What lesson about forgiveness does she give Antonio with her comparison of Tenorio to a wolf?

She says that, like the wolf seeking absolution for his crime, Tenorio will never find forgiveness because he has never admitted his guilt or done any penance.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN (*Diecisiete*)

1. What is the village's reaction to the invention and nearby testing of the atomic bomb? To what theme does it relate?

The villagers worry that humankind seeks to know more than God, and the result will bring destruction to everyone. The atomic tests also seem to have interfered with nature, as a harsh winter and sandstorms on the Ilano seem to have been the result. This underscores the theme of the human relation to the natural world.

2. How does Antonio's father echo this theme in his response to Antonio's question?

Antonio's father gives voice to the concept of self-accountability. He says it is wrong to blame humankind's mistakes and misuse of the earth on the bomb; humanity itself, and not simply one of its inventions, is responsible.

3. What does the discussion of sin and confession say about Antonio's classmates?

It shows that, unlike Antonio, many of his classmates are limited and childlike in their understanding of sin, forgiveness and other spiritual matters.

4. Who else, besides Antonia, stands apart in this conversation. What do we learn about this character?

Florence stands apart, as he professes not to believe in God. He is an orphan; his sisters work at Rosie's, and his life has been one of such complete challenge and frequent misery that he cannot believe in any supreme being. He attends catechism only for the company of the other boys.

5. How does this further challenge Antonio's religious beliefs?

Florence questions the presence of a God in a world that is full of evil. This skepticism parallels Antonio's own doubts of God's power, especially regarding the murder of Narciso and the apparent lack of punishment for Tenorio.

6. What thought does Antonio express? Why does he immediately regret expressing it?

He ponders aloud the possibility of God's being absent, and the Virgin's and the Golden Carp's ruling in his absence. A clap of thunder makes him believe he has committed a blasphemy.

7. Of what is Florence's punishment at Sunday school reminiscent? What resonance does it have for Antonio?

For being late to class, Florence is forced to stand in the aisle with his arms outstretched on either side. His physical stance echoes the Crucifixion. Tony was also late, but is excused, and feels guilty. Meanwhile, the catechism lesson continues, with Father Byrnes teaching traditional Catholic dogma, including the concept of hell as eternal damnation for sin. Only Florence seems undisturbed by this notion of eternity. Again, Antonio's traditional Catholic belief system is challenged by a perceived lack of justice and Florence's apparent serenity in being a non-believer.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN (*Dieciocho*)

1. How does Antonio's dream, in which Antonio questions why the fires of hell engulf Florence, illustrate his spiritual questions?

Antonio's concept of God as a vengeful and unforgiving force is depicted here, as well as his fear for his own soul. This amplifies his questions about the true nature of God.. The flames are supposedly engulfing Florence for being a non-believer; despite Antonio's urging, Florence will not say that he believes in God. Florence's own "faith" appears stronger even than the punishment for non-belief and the urging of a believer.

2. Why does Samuel suggest they should show Florence the golden carp?

He senses how disturbed Antonio is by Florence's refusal to acknowledge God, and he thinks it will help if Florence is shown an alternative belief system.

3. What is the significance of the other children's loading Antonio down with sweaters and coats and forcing him to play the role of confessor?

The heavy load of garments most likely represents the priestly burden of hearing peoples' sins, which would be Antonio's life if he were to become a priest.

4. In what way is Antonio's absolution of Florence a turning point for Antonio? What story line or theme does it advance?

When the classmates try to beat Florence for refusing to say he has sinned, Antonio takes command, absolves Florence, and refuses to let the other children punish him. Antonio is then tortured by his classmates in Florence's place. The allusions to the Christian belief that, in his crucifixion Jesus absolved humanity of its sins and bore the punishment for those sins himself is clearly reflected in Antonio's actions. He, at once, reinforces his role as priest and matures further in his ability to stand by and for his principles.

CHAPTER NINETEEN (*Diecinueve*)

1. What effect does the ritual of changing bread and wine into flesh and blood during mass have on the children?

Most of them are puzzled by the symbolism; Florence disputes it entirely, saying the wine remains wine because the priest is a wino. He also says he will not take Communion because he cannot “eat God.” Only Antonio seems to understand the ritual, linking the changing of wine into blood to the blood he has seen spilled.

2. What theme is echoed by Antonio's receiving of his First Communion?

Antonio is in a state of intense anticipation, believing that receiving the Host will answer all of his questions and leave him in a changed state. When this does not immediately occur, he is left with the same questions he had before. This underscores the theme of the need for the individual quest for truth; no belief system, regardless of how strong its traditions, can substitute for independent thought.

CHAPTER TWENTY (*Veinte*)

1. What clues suggest that Antonio and his classmates are growing up?

At the beginning of the chapter, the formation of rival gangs and fighting is alluded to; when Antonio questions his teacher, she tells him it is part of growing up. Later, he sees the Vitamin Kid on the bridge and challenges him to their usual race, but the Kid is too busy talking to a girl to race him. Antonio is saddened by the knowledge that time and childhood are passing.

2. Why does Tellez come to visit the Marez family?

He has come to ask for Ultima's help in battling a curse that has been placed on his family.

3. How does Tellez's arrival underscore Antonio's doubts and questions?

The family has already called in a priest to bless the house, but the curse continues unabated. Once again, he finds himself questioning why God does not punish those he perceives as wicked.

4. How do the clouds that darken the Tellez house, and the rocks that fall on its roof, illustrate the literary convention of pathetic fallacy? How do they illustrate the literary school of Magical Realism?

The clouds and rocks are examples of pathetic fallacy because they are inanimate objects that are given human characteristics by the author, in this case expressing the malevolence of human vengeance. They also invest the narrative with the supernatural, the chief characteristic of Magical Realism.

5. What themes are advanced by Ultima's attributing the curse to the work of man and not the devil? Who else has echoed a similar sentiment?

The themes of human responsibility to the earth and to one another and the need to live in harmony are expressed here. Ultima is echoing Gabriel's earlier statement about the atomic bomb.

6. What can be inferred by Antonio's dream about his brothers?

His three wandering brothers ask him to release them from their wandering sea blood, but Antonio tells them he has no magic to help them. His brothers are disemboweled by the raging waters of the River of the Carp, and Antonio baits a hook with their livers. Then, moved by their cries for release, he casts their livers back into the water so they may rest. The dream is a parable of sin and redemption, but also points to Antonio's increasing acceptance of his own human limitations.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE (Veintiuno)

1. What does Antonio's asking whether he must choose between the Catholic God and the golden carp reveal about his inner struggle?

The question reveals Antonio's progress toward resolving his spiritual crisis; by questioning Cico, and by extensio, everything he has learned and witnessed up to this point, he is making a step toward forming his own belief system.

2. What is the next challenge for Antonio, and what does it push him toward?

Just as Cico and Antonio decide to tell Florence about the golden carp, they find that he has drowned in the river. The knowledge that Florence died with neither faith in God nor knowledge of the golden carp brings Antonio to an emotional and spiritual crossroads. It is apparent that he will need to resolve his inner conflict soon.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO (Vientidos)

1. How does Antonio's dream in this chapter reflect the current nature of his inner turmoil?

In the dream, Antonio has a nightmarish vision in which everything he has believed in is destroyed, including the Church, the golden carp, Ultima's magic, and even Ultima herself. He is forced to witness the possibility of chaos and disbelief triumphing over everything he holds sacred.

2. What is the parallel between Antonio's nightmare and Christian belief? Why is it significant for Antonio's development?

At the end of the dream, Antonio screams, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" The death of Christ on the cross is echoed; Antonio is experiencing his own emotional and spiritual mortification. This is the climactic moment of all his dreams, the darkest moment of doubt and emotional pain, and his ultimate rite of passage. He must face his own fears and doubts in order to surpass them and move forward.

3. What does Antonio's father say that helps guide Antonio toward a resolution of his identity crisis?

Gabriel speaks of the differences between himself and Maria, how he is of the wind and she is of the earth, and muses that perhaps it is time to give up their old conflict.

4. How is it shown that Antonio is moving toward this resolution?

Antonio articulates the idea that, perhaps, he can be both Marez and Luna—that instead of having to choose one over the other, he can accept that he is both.

5. How is the possible integration of his two conflicting natures reflected in his spiritual growth? What theme is Anaya probably establishing?

While reasoning that he does not need to choose between the Marez and Luna aspects of his nature, he also begins to question whether, perhaps, a new religion can be made, one that includes God and the golden carp, the Ilano and the river, the moon and the sea. Antonio is clearly moving toward independent thought, and a mature and healthy reconciling of apparently irreconcilable ideas. On the thematic level, Anaya is possibly advocating a respect for all belief systems. One can learn lessons from religion, from folklore, from nature—but it is up to the individual to forge his or her own moral, ethical and spiritual code.

6. What theme is expressed in Gabriel's speech to Antonio about evil being not really evil at all, but ignorance and misunderstanding?

The effect of culture on the individual is expressed here. The battle between good and evil is perceived as the battle between human ignorance and knowledge, between prejudice and empathy, and between vengeance and forgiveness. The conflict between Tenorio and Ultima can be seen as the result of human limitation rather than cosmic forces like good and evil.

7. What other evidence is provided in this chapter that suggests Antonio has begun to reconcile both sides of his nature?

Antonio's time with the Lunas is a happy one; he learns more about their customs and history, grows stronger and healthier, and perceives that the life of the farmer—while it may or may not be in his future—is nevertheless a good life. However, when his uncle Pedro refers to him as a Luna, Antonio corrects him by saying, "I am Marez."

8. How is Antonio's new inner strength tested?

Tenorio again vows vengeance against Ultima for the death of his second daughter. On his way back home, Antonio encounters Tenorio, who tries to run him down with his horse.

9. How does Tenorio finally wreak his vengeance on Ultima?

Tenorio kills Ultima's owl, the embodiment of her soul and her protective spirit. When the owl dies, Ultima dies as well.

10. What penalty does Tenorio pay for his deed?

Tenorio is shot by Antonio's uncle.

11. What does Ultima say to Antonio to help him toward acceptance of her death?

She tells him that, with her passing and Tenorio's, harmony will be restored. The battle between them will be over.

12. What does she ask of Antonio that underlines his journey to understanding?

She asks him to bear no ill will toward Tenorio, and she charges him with the burial of the owl.

Bless Me, Ultima

CHAPTER ONE (*Uno*)

1. How does Ultima come to be a part of the Marez family?

2. Why does the family address Ultima with the title *La Grande*?

3. What is a *curandera*?

4. What does Antonio's first dream portray, and what does it foreshadow?

5. What is the major source of conflict for Antonio's mother and father?

6. What effect does this conflict have on Antonio?

7. What adds to Antonio's inner turmoil?

8. Why does Ultima allow Antonio to call her by her Christian name and not the title *La Grande*?

CHAPTER TWO (*Dos*)

1. What is the major event in this chapter. Why is it important to Antonio's inner journey?

2. Explain the moral ambiguity of Lupito's death.

3. What does Narciso's attempted intervention say about the character of the community?

4. Describe how Ultima shows her powers of healing, both physically and spiritually.

CHAPTER THREE (*Tres*)

1. Is Antonio cured by Ultima's ministrations?

2. What is the cause of the Sunday morning arguments between Maria and Gabriel?

3. Why does Maria's comment, "What a sin it is for boy to grow into a man" disturb Antonio?

4. How does Anaya escalate Antonio's unease over the death of Lupito, and what it means?

5. Are his anxieties addressed in this chapter, and how?

6. How does Antonio earn the respect of the boys from town before they go into mass?

7. How is this significant in a metaphorical way?

CHAPTER FOUR (*Cuatro*)

1. How does Anaya show Ultima in her role as teacher/mentor to Antonio?

2. What does Antonio sense in the stillness of the *Ilano* that frightens and mystifies him?

3. Describe how this is an example of the technique of pathetic fallacy, and how it contributes to the story.

4. What is the significance of the statue of the *Virgen de Guadalupe*?

5. How does the persona of the Virgen differ from God in Antonio's mind, and what does this portend?

CHAPTER FIVE (*Cinco*)

1. Why does the family, except Gabriel, go to El Puerto?

2. What do we learn about the history of the Lunas?

3. Describe the emotional tone of the visit to El Puerto, and what it says about the characters.

4. How does Uncle Juan perceive Antonio?

CHAPTER SIX (*Seis*)

1. Tony's first day of school presents him with what challenge?

2. Who are his guides when he first gets to the school?

3. What is Antonio's first lesson, and what does it signify?

4. Why is Antonio embarrassed by the Mexican lunch his mother has made for him, and why is this significant?

5. How does Antonio cope?

CHAPTER SEVEN (*Siete*)

1. What does Antonio's dream of his brothers' returning from war signify?

2. How is this communicated?

CHAPTER EIGHT (*Ocho*)

1. How is each of the brothers characterized? In what ways is their role in the novel similar to the chorus in a Greek tragedy?

2. What future plot event seems likely at the end of the chapter? What suggests this?

3. How is the difference between Antonio's character and his brothers' made clear?

CHAPTER NINE (*Nueve*)

1. What does Antonio's dream at the beginning of the chapter indicate?

2. How is this shown?

3. How are Maria and Gabriel united in the scene following the dream?

4. What is a source of consolation for Antonio and his parents?

5. What decision does Antonio make that indicates he is growing toward independence?

6. Why doesn't Samuel fish for carp?

7. What challenge does the legend of the golden carp present to Antonio? What theme does this challenge reinforce?

CHAPTER TEN (*Diez*)

1. Why is the trip with Ultima, to help cure his uncle, a turning point for Antonio?

2. How does the novel reveal itself as an example of Magical Realism here?

3. What is underlined by the introduction of Magical Realism?

4. How is Antonio's experience of his uncle's cure both an ordeal and a rite of passage?

5. How is Ultima's power as a *curandera* perceived by the people of the town, after Lucas' cure?

6. What might this ambivalence foreshadow?

CHAPTER ELEVEN (*Once*)

1. What does Cico's insisting that Antonio take an oath before showing him the golden carp indicate?

2. What does the description of Narciso's garden tell us?

3. In what way does Antonio stand apart from the boys he and Cico run into before going to the river?

4. How is the appearance of the golden carp revelatory to Antonio? What does it amplify for him?

5. Why is the golden carp safe from fishermen? Why is that significant?

6. What Christian belief does the prophecy of the golden carp parallel?

7. Why is the fact that the town is surrounded by water important, both as Christian metaphor and according to native folklore?

8. What key statement does Ultima make when Antonio asks her whether he is to believe in the legend of the golden carp?

9. What does Antonio's dream that night signify?

CHAPTER TWELVE (*Doce*)

1. What does the scapular that Ultima gives to Antonio symbolize?

2. What is revealed by the visitors from Las Pasturas?

3. How is Tenorio's accusation of witchcraft against Ultima ironic?

4. How does Narciso defuse the situation?

5. What is the metaphorical significance of Tenorio's being blinded by the owl?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN (*Trece*)

1. What fuels Antonio's inner struggle about religion in this chapter?

2. What does Antonio reveal about himself when he finally gets his uncle to admit his cowardice?

3. What does the Marez family's characterization of Tenorio and his sisters suggest? How is their suspicion about Tenorio ironic?

4. How does the rumor about Tenorio and his sisters advance the plot? What events are likely to develop?

CHAPTER FOURTEEN (*Catorce*)

1. What theme does Samuel's warning to Antonio emphasize?

2. What else in the chapter underlines this theme?

3. What does Antonio's defense of Ultima reveal about how he is growing?

4. How is Ultima's warning to Antonio about "the evil in the wind" ambiguous? What does it portend?

5. What does the school play illuminate about Antonio's schoolmates. How does it function in the story?

6. What is the major event of this chapter?

7. What does Antonio learn?

8. What is the climax of the chapter. How does it affect Antonio?

9. Does Antonio's dream point to any resolution of his spiritual crisis? Why or why not?

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (*Quince*)

1. What is unspoken, but apparent, between Antonio and his brother Andrew at the beginning of the chapter?

2. What does Antonio's approaching First Communion signify for him?

3. What clue reveals that Leon and Gene have returned to the family because of a misadventure? What does the misadventure say about their characters?

4. How does Gabriel reveal the effect of his sons' return?

5. What does Antonio wonder when Andrew leaves with Leon and Gene? What is the implication of Antonio's thoughts?

CHAPTER SIXTEEN (*Dieciseis*)

1. What strengthens Antonio's resolve when he stands up to Tenorio?

2. Why is Ultima unconcerned about Tenorio's threats?

3. What lesson about forgiveness does she give Antonio with her comparison of Tenorio to a wolf?

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN (*Diecisiete*)

1. What is the village's reaction to the invention and nearby testing of the atomic bomb? To what theme does it relate?

2. How does Antonio's father echo this theme in his response to Antonio's question?

3. What does the discussion of sin and confession say about Antonio's classmates?

4. Who else, besides Antonia, stands apart in this conversation. What do we learn about this character?

5. How does this further challenge Antonio's religious beliefs?

6. What thought does Antonio express? Why does he immediate regret expressing it?

7. Of what is Florence's punishment at Sunday school reminiscent? What resonance does it have for Antonio?

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN (*Dieciocho*)

1. How does Antonio's dream, in which Antonio questions why the fires of hell engulf Florence, illustrate his spiritual questions?

2. Why does Samuel suggest they should show Florence the golden carp?

3. What is the significance of the other children's loading Antonio down with sweaters and coats and forcing him to play the role of confessor?

4. In what way is Antonio's absolution of Florence a turning point for Antonio? What story line or theme does it advance?

CHAPTER NINETEEN (*Diecinueve*)

1. What effect does the ritual of changing bread and wine into flesh and blood during mass have on the children?

2. What theme is echoed by Antonio's receiving of his First Communion?

CHAPTER TWENTY (*Veinte*)

1. What clues suggest that Antonio and his classmates are growing up?

2. Why does Tellez come to visit the Marez family?

3. How does Tellez's arrival underscore Antonio's doubts and questions?

4. How do the clouds that darken the Tellez house, and the rocks that fall on its roof, illustrate the literary convention of pathetic fallacy? How do they illustrate the literary school of Magical Realism?

5. What themes are advanced by Ultima's attributing the curse to the work of man and not the devil? Who else has echoed a similar sentiment?

6. What can be inferred by Antonio's dream about his brothers?

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE (*Veintiuno*)

1. What does Antonio's asking whether he must choose between the Catholic God and the golden carp reveal about his inner struggle?

2. What is the next challenge for Antonio, and what does it push him toward?

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO (*Vientidos*)

1. How does Antonio's dream in this chapter reflect the current nature of his inner turmoil?

2. What is the parallel between Antonio's nightmare and Christian belief? Why is it significant for Antonio's development?

3. What does Antonio's father say that helps guide Antonio toward a resolution of his identity crisis?

4. How is it shown that Antonio is moving toward this resolution?

5. How is the possible integration of his two conflicting natures reflected in his spiritual growth? What theme is Anaya probably establishing?

6. What theme is expressed in Gabriel's speech to Antonio about evil being not really evil at all, but ignorance and misunderstanding?

7. What other evidence is provided in this chapter that suggests Antonio has begun to reconcile both sides of his nature?

8. How is Antonio's new inner strength tested?

9. How does Tenorio finally wreak his vengeance on Ultima?

10. What penalty does Tenorio pay for his deed?

11. What does Ultima say to Antonio to help him toward acceptance of her death?

12. What does she ask of Antonio that underlines his journey to understanding?

The Perfect Balance Between Cost and Quality for Classic Paperbacks

WITH ALL OF THE DIFFERENT EDITIONS of classics available, what makes *Prestwick House Literary Touchstone Classics™* better?

Our editions were designed by former teachers with the needs of teachers and students in mind. Because we've struggled to stretch tight budgets and had to deal with the deficiencies of cheaply made paperbacks, we've produced high-quality trade editions at remarkably low prices. As a result, our editions have it all.

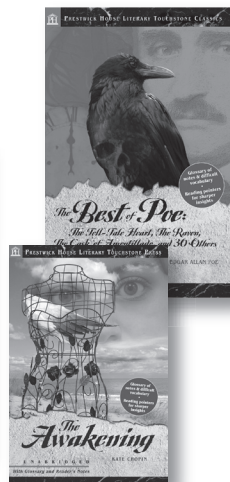
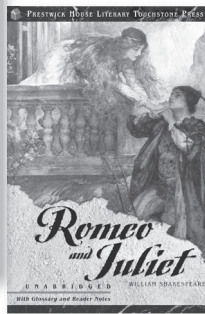
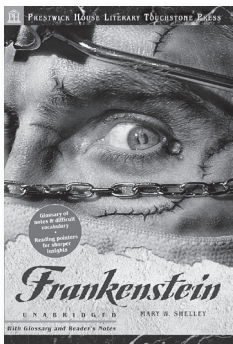
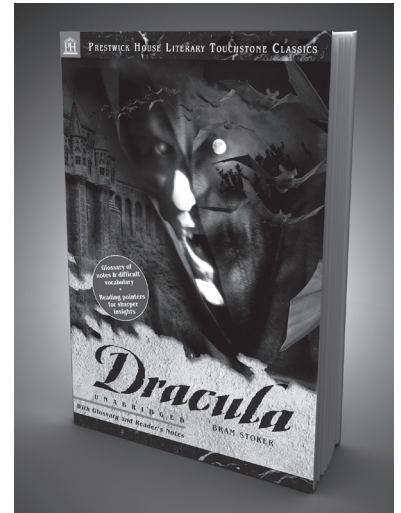
Value Pricing – With our extraordinary Educators' Discount, you get these books at **50% or more off the list price.**

Reading Pointers for Sharper Insights – Concise notes that encourage students to question and consider points of plot, theme, characterization, and style, etc.

Glossary and Vocabulary – An A-to-Z glossary makes sure that your students won't get lost in difficult allusions or archaic vocabulary and concepts.

Sturdy Bindings and High-Quality Paper – High-quality construction ensures these editions hold up to heavy, repeated use.

Strategies for Understanding Shakespeare – Each *Shakespeare Literary Touchstone Classic™* contains line numbers, margin notes, and a guide to understanding Shakespeare's language, as well as key strategies for getting the most from the plays.



Special Introductory Discount for Educators only – At Least 50% Off!

New titles are constantly being added; call or visit our website for current listing.

| | Retail Price | Intro. | Discount |
|---|--------------|--------|----------|
| 200053..... <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> - Twain TU RJ AT AP | \$4.99 | | \$2.49 |
| 200473..... <i>Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The</i> - Twain TU RJ AT | \$4.99 | | \$2.49 |
| 202116..... <i>Alice's Adventure in Wonderland</i> - Carroll TU RJ | \$3.99 | | \$1.99 |
| 202118..... <i>Antigone</i> - Sophocles TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | | \$1.99 |
| 200141..... <i>Awakening, The</i> - Chopin TU RJ AT AP | \$3.99 | | \$1.99 |
| 202111..... <i>Beowulf</i> - Roberts (ed.) TU | \$3.99 | | \$1.99 |
| 204866..... <i>Best of Poe, The: The Tell-Tale Heart, The Raven, The Cask of Amontillado, and 30 Others</i> - Poe | \$4.99 | | \$2.49 |
| 200150..... <i>Call of the Wild, The</i> - London TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | | \$1.99 |
| 200348..... <i>Canterbury Tales</i> - Chaucer TU | \$3.99 | | \$1.99 |
| 200179..... <i>Christmas Carol, A</i> - Dickens TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | | \$1.99 |
| 201198..... <i>Crime and Punishment</i> - Dostoyevsky TU | \$6.99 | | \$3.49 |
| 200694..... <i>Doll's House, A</i> - Ibsen TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | | \$1.99 |
| 200190..... <i>Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i> - Stevenson TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | | \$1.99 |

| | | |
|--|--------|--------|
| 202113..... <i>Dracula</i> - Stoker TU RJ | \$5.99 | \$2.99 |
| 200166..... <i>Ethan Frome</i> - Wharton TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 200054..... <i>Frankenstein</i> - Shelley TU RJ AT AP | \$4.99 | \$1.99 |
| 202112..... <i>Great Expectations</i> - Dickens TU RJ AT AP | \$5.99 | \$2.99 |
| 202108..... <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> - Swift TU | \$4.99 | \$2.49 |
| 200091..... <i>Hamlet</i> - Shakespeare TU RJ AT AP | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 200074..... <i>Heart of Darkness</i> - Conrad TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 202117..... <i>Hound of the Baskervilles, The</i> - Doyle TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 200147..... <i>Importance of Being Earnest, The</i> - Wilde TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 301414..... <i>Invisible Man, The</i> - Wells TU RJ | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 202115..... <i>Jane Eyre</i> - Brontë TU RJ | \$6.99 | \$3.49 |
| 200146..... <i>Julius Caesar</i> - Shakespeare TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 201817..... <i>Jungle, The</i> - Sinclair TU RJ AT | \$5.99 | \$2.99 |
| 200125..... <i>Macbeth</i> - Shakespeare TU RJ AT AP | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 204864..... <i>Medea</i> - Euripides TU | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 200133..... <i>Metamorphosis, The</i> - Kafka TU RJ | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 200081..... <i>Midsummer Night's Dream, A</i> - Shakespeare TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 202123..... <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> - Shakespeare TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 301391..... <i>My Antonia</i> - Cather TU RJ | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 200079..... <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> - Douglass TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 301269..... <i>Odyssey, The</i> - Butler (trans.) TU RJ AT | \$4.99 | \$2.49 |
| 200564..... <i>Oedipus Rex</i> - Sophocles TU | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 200095..... <i>Othello</i> - Shakespeare TU RJ AT AP | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 202121..... <i>Picture of Dorian Gray, The</i> - Wilde TU RJ | \$4.99 | \$2.49 |
| 200368..... <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> - Austen TU RJ AT | \$4.99 | \$2.49 |
| 202114..... <i>Prince, The</i> - Machavelli TU | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 200791..... <i>Pygmalion</i> - Shaw TU | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 200102..... <i>Red Badge of Courage, The</i> - Crane TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 200193..... <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> - Shakespeare TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$0.99 |
| 200132..... <i>Scarlet Letter, The</i> - Hawthorne TU AT AP | \$4.99 | \$2.49 |
| 202119..... <i>Siddhartha</i> - Hesse TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 204863..... <i>Silas Marner</i> - Eliot TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 200251..... <i>Tale of Two Cities, A</i> - Dickens AT AP | \$5.99 | \$2.99 |
| 200231..... <i>Taming of the Shrew, The</i> - Shakespeare TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 204865..... <i>Time Machine, The</i> - Wells TU RJ AT | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 202120..... <i>Treasure Island</i> - Stevenson TU RJ | \$4.99 | \$2.49 |
| 301420..... <i>War of the Worlds</i> - Wells TU RJ | \$3.99 | \$1.99 |
| 202122..... <i>Wuthering Heights</i> - Brontë TU AT | \$5.99 | \$2.99 |

TU Teaching Units RJ Response Journals AP Activity Pack AT AP Teaching Units



PRESTWICK HOUSE, INC.

"Everything for the English Classroom!"

P.O. Box 658 • Clayton, DE 19938 • (800) 932-4593 • (888) 718-9333 • www.prestwickhouse.com



P R E S T W I C K H O U S E , I N C .

Order Form

Call 1-800-932-4593 Fax 1-888-718-9333

Prestwick House, Inc.
P.O. Box 658
Clayton, DE 19938

Bill To: ☐ Home ☐ School

| |
|---------------------------|
| School: |
| Name: |
| Address: |
| City, State, Zip: |
| Phone: _____ Email: _____ |

Ship To: ☐ Home ☐ School

| |
|---------------------------|
| School: |
| Name: |
| Address: |
| City, State, Zip: |
| Phone: _____ Email: _____ |

| ITEM NO | TITLE | QUANTITY | X | PRICE | = | TOTAL |
|---------|-------|----------|---|-------|---|-------|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Method of Payment (Choose one)

☐ Check or Money Order Enclosed

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover Card ☐ American Express

☐ Purchase Order Enclosed

We accept purchase orders and authorized orders charged to institutions. Personal orders not on a credit card must be accompanied by a check.

Signature _____

Telephone # _____

Exp. Date _____

Credit Card #

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|

Because charges for air delivery are based on weight and distance, heavy packages can be expensive to ship air freight. Typographic and photographic errors are subject to revision. Prestwick House is the sole source of all proprietary materials listed in this catalogue. Please be sure to include a street address. FedEx ground/UPS will not deliver to a P.O. Box.

Subtotal \$ _____

Shipping 12% S&H (\$6.00 minimum) \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Shipping & Handling

For orders of \$50.00 or less, please add \$6.00 for shipping and handling charges. For orders from \$50.01 to \$799.99 add 12%. For orders of \$800.00 and more, add 10%.

Delivery Service

Most orders are shipped FedEx and you can expect delivery within 7-10 working days. Items in stock are usually shipped within one working day of receiving your order.

Expedited Delivery

for expedited delivery ask about the following options:

- Overnight Air
- 2nd day air
- 3 Day Select