

Wuthering Heights Study Guide Questions

Directions: Answer each question, citing textual evidence to support your answers. You may choose to record your answers on a separate sheet of paper or type your answers.

Chapter I

1. Briefly describe the landscape and the architecture found in the first chapter. Relate them to both the Gothic novel literary genre and Romanticism (look these up if you are unfamiliar with these terms).
2. What inscription over the door does Mr. Lockwood notice, and why does he not question Mr. Heathcliff about it?
3. What is the narrative point of view of the first chapter?
4. Characterize Mr. Lockwood. What is his present situation?
5. Why does Mr. Lockwood describe his location as a “perfect misanthropist’s heaven”?
6. Reread the first full description of Heathcliff. Are you attracted, repelled, or merely interested in him from this description. Why?
9. How does Lockwood characterize Heathcliff’s class in contrast to his appearance? How would you categorize Lockwood’s class and why?
10. How do you think Brontë intended the reader to feel towards Mr. Lockwood at the end of the first chapter?

Chapter II

1. What drives Mr. Lockwood to return to Wuthering Heights? Evaluate his decision.
2. What does the dialect Joseph speaks in suggest about him? How does the use of dialect affect the story? Who else speaks with a dialect in this chapter?
3. Characterize Mrs. Heathcliff based on the descriptions of her in this chapter.
4. Why is Mr. Lockwood confused at first about the social position of Hareton Earnshaw? What appears to be the relationship between Hareton and the other house members?
5. Mr. Lockwood makes a series of mistaken assumptions about the inhabitants of Wuthering Heights. Identify his blunders, and Heathcliff’s corrections.
6. What series of events leads to Mr. Lockwood’s nosebleed? Who comes to his aide?

Chapter III

1. What insight into Heathcliff’s character does Lockwood gain by perusing the antique books?
2. What mood is evoked by the description of Lockwood’s dreams? Identify specific imagery that contributes to the mood.
3. What type of shift occurs in Heathcliff’s attitude after Lockwood reveals himself?
4. What conclusions can be drawn from Heathcliff’s behavior after Lockwood leaves the bedroom?
5. What does the exchange between Heathcliff and Mrs. Heathcliff reveal about their respective characters?

Chapter IV

1. In what way does the narrative change in this chapter? What effect does it have on the story?
2. How does Heathcliff come to reside at Wuthering Heights? What are the class implications of his background, given the setting?
3. How did Heathcliff’s presence affect the relationships between other members of the family?
4. What is Heathcliff’s attitude toward Mr. Earnshaw?
5. Relate Heathcliff’s origins to the *Byronic Hero* character type (look this term up).
6. Identify the foreshadowing that occurs at the end of Chapter IV.

Chapter V

1. How were Heathcliff's negative qualities encouraged by Mr. Earnshaw's illness?
2. Nelly describes Catherine's behavior during Mr. Earnshaw's illness. What does it suggest about Catherine's character?
3. How is Heathcliff and Catherine's close relationship demonstrated in Chapter V?

Chapter VI

1. What are the class implications of the changes Hindley makes to Heathcliff's life at Wuthering Heights?
2. How do Heathcliff and Catherine generally spend their days? Relate their activities to the Romantic genre.
3. Why does Heathcliff dislike Edgar and Isabella Linton? How does Catherine feel towards the Lintons?
4. Describe how the weather relates to the events of the chapter.
5. Identify further evidence of Heathcliff's feelings toward Catherine in Chapter VI.

Chapter VII

1. How is Catherine altered by her stay at Thrushcross Grange? How will the changes in Catherine most likely affect her relationship with Heathcliff?
2. Why does Heathcliff become angry with Catherine when she returns?
3. How and why does Heathcliff envy Edgar Linton?
4. How does Nelly attempt to help Heathcliff? In what way is their plan foiled, and how does Catherine respond?
5. What disturbing quality does Heathcliff exhibit in relation to his feelings for Hindley?
6. How does Lockwood distinguish Nelly from other members of her class?

Chapter VIII

1. What gains and losses does Hindley experience in Chapter VIII? How does he respond to both?
2. How does Catherine's character become divided to some extent?
3. What are Nelly's true feelings toward Catherine at this point? Do they affect her reliability as a narrator in any way?
4. How has Heathcliff and Catherine's relationship changed? What event demonstrates that change?
5. What offensive behavior does Catherine engage in towards Edgar? How do they reconcile?

Chapter IX

1. How does Heathcliff unwittingly thwart his own revenge? What poor behavior on the part of Hindley leads to the occurrence?
2. What considerations drive Catherine to accept Edgar's proposal, despite her love for Heathcliff? How does her decision relate to the status of women during this time period and the class structure?
3. What does Catherine's dream and explanation of it reveal about her relationship with Heathcliff?
4. Why does Nelly feel Catherine is misguided about her duties as a wife? How does Catherine's response demonstrate the differences in her feelings for Edgar and

Heathcliff?

5. What is the likely cause of Heathcliff's departure from Wuthering Heights?
6. How does the weather again coincide with a significant plot event?
7. How are Catherine's negative personality traits encouraged by her illness?
8. Why is Nelly forced to leave Wuthering Heights?

Chapter X

1. According to Nelly, why was Catherine able to behave so well at Thrushcross Grange before Heathcliff's return?
2. How does Catherine resolve to settle Edgar's concerns over bringing Heathcliff into the parlour? How is the exchange related to a theme of the novel?
3. In what ways is Heathcliff altered?
4. What effect does Heathcliff's return have on Catherine and Edgar's relationship?
5. What does Heathcliff mean by this speech? What does it tell you about his character? "I heard of your marriage, Cathy, not long since; and, while waiting in the yard below, I meditated this plan—just to have one glimpse of your face, a stare of surprise, perhaps, and pretended pleasure; afterwards settle my score with Hindley; and then prevent the law by doing execution on myself. Your welcome has put these ideas out of my mind..."
6. Describe the suffering both Heathcliff and Catherine claim to have experienced in each other's absence.
7. What are the possible negative implications of Isabella's interest in Heathcliff? How does Catherine attempt to deter Isabella's feelings, and what is Isabella's response?
8. What bad conduct does Heathcliff seem to be engaging in at Wuthering Heights? How does he explain his presence there to Catherine?
9. At the close of Chapter X, what analogy does Nelly use to describe how she felt about Heathcliff's presence at Wuthering Heights?

Chapter XI

1. How does Nelly demonstrate her superstition in Chapter XI?
2. How does Heathcliff appear to be executing his revenge on Hindley? What other relationship of the novel does the interaction between Hareton and Heathcliff parallel?
3. What provokes the argument between Catherine and Heathcliff? What is Heathcliff inferring when he alleges that Catherine has wronged him?
4. "The tyrant grinds down his slaves and they don't turn against him; they crush those beneath them." What does Heathcliff mean by this statement? In his scenario, who are the tyrant, the slaves, and those beneath them?
5. How does Edgar attempt to resolve the situation with Heathcliff, and why does Catherine lock them into the kitchen? Relate the scene to Romanticism and the Gothic novel.
6. Why does Heathcliff leave without repaying the blow Edgar gave him?
7. What is Nelly's role in the dispute? How do you think Brontë intended the reader to feel about her behavior?
8. Do you think Heathcliff is a sympathetic character or a villain at this point in the novel?
9. How does Catherine plan to get back at Edgar? In what way does she feel he has wronged her? What character traits underlie her behavior?
10. What ultimatum does Edgar give to Catherine? What is her response, and why do you think she responds this way?
11. How does Edgar attempt to deter Isabella's affection for Heathcliff?

Chapter XII

1. How does Nelly compare herself to the other household members? How might her characterization affect the reader's perception of her subsequent behavior?
2. What effect does Nelly's description of Edgar's studies have on Catherine?
3. What behavior on the part of Catherine causes Nelly to begin to believe in the seriousness of her illness?
4. What is the focus of Catherine's rantings? How is the scene characteristic of Romantic writings?
5. "But, Heathcliff, if I dare you now, will you venture? If you do, I'll keep you. I'll not lie there by myself: they may bury me twelve feet deep and throw the church down over me, but I won't rest till you are with me. I never will!" (Pg. 110)
Relate Catherine's declaration above to Lockwood's experience at Wuthering Heights in the beginning of the novel. What did Brontë likely intend the reader to believe?
6. What does the window seem to represent to Catherine?
7. Why does Edgar declare Isabella has disowned him at the close of Chapter XII?

Chapter XIII

1. What will be the likely permanent consequence of Catherine's illness? How does Edgar respond to the diagnosis?
2. What is the significance of Catherine's pregnancy? What are the possible implications of the sex of the child?
3. How does Nelly explain having kept Isabella's letter?
4. What do the two questions Isabella poses to Nelly reveal about her situation at Wuthering Heights?
5. Briefly characterize the relationships between the various members of Wuthering Heights upon Isabella's arrival.
6. Why does Heathcliff swear to punish Isabella in the place of Edgar at the close of Chapter XIII?

Chapter XIV

1. What reasons does Edgar provide for continuing to spurn Isabella's appeals for forgiveness?
2. How has the atmosphere at Wuthering Heights affected Isabella physically? Compare her appearance to Heathcliff's.
3. What further evidence does Heathcliff give of his love and passion for Catherine in Chapter XIV?
4. What delusions did Isabella hold regarding Heathcliff's character? Identify reasons for and against feeling sympathetic toward Isabella.
5. "No; you're not fit to be your own guardian, Isabella, now; and I, being your legal protector, must retain you in my custody, however distasteful the obligation may be."
How does the above quote further explain the status of women throughout the novel?
6. How does Heathcliff convince Nelly to carry a letter to Catherine, and what do his actions demonstrate about his character? What is Nelly's rationale for agreeing?

Chapter XV

1. Whom does Catherine blame for her impending death? What emotions seem to drive her harsh words?
2. What is Catherine's conception of what her existence will be after death?

3. How does Heathcliff seem to be not of the human species in this scene?
4. Who does Heathcliff blame for Catherine's impending death? Is he able to offer his forgiveness?
5. Identify typical elements of Romanticism that are present in this scene.
6. Explain Nelly's agitation at Heathcliff's refusal to leave. What does she fear will be the consequences if Edgar finds him there?

Chapter XVI

1. What is the emerging pattern of deaths in the novel?
2. How does Heathcliff respond to the news of Catherine's death? Is his character sympathetic at this time?
3. What final attempt does Heathcliff make to compete with Edgar? How does his attempt again emphasize how the two men are opposites?
4. What is the significance of where Catherine is buried? What does it reveal about Edgar?

Chapter XVII

1. How does the weather again play into the events of the story?
2. Contrast Isabella's condition on arrival at the Grange with her demeanor the last time Nelly saw her. How has she changed?
3. Why does Isabella feel certain Heathcliff won't chase her?
4. How does Isabella react to Hindley's plan? Is her response surprising? What does her response demonstrate about her character?
5. Is Heathcliff still sympathetic during Chapter XVII? What can you infer about why he is so brutal at this particular time?
6. What is Heathcliff's attitude toward his child?
7. What is the difference in the wishes Edgar and Heathcliff have for Catherine's soul?
8. What similar experiences have Edgar and Hindley endured? How does Nelly explain the difference in their reactions?
9. Compare how Hindley's death affects Nelly to how Catherine's death affected her. Is there any significance in the difference?
10. What are the financial circumstances of Hindley's death and the consequences for Hareton?
11. "Now, my bonny lad, you are mine! And we'll see if one tree won't grow as crooked as another, with the same wind to twist it!" What does Heathcliff mean? How does he intend to dispute Edgar's claim to the child?
12. Why is it ironic that Heathcliff has become the master of Wuthering Heights?

Chapter XVIII

1. What characteristics of her mother and father does Cathy possess?
2. What are the effects of Edgar's confining Cathy so completely to the Grange?
3. Why is Edgar drawn away from the Grange?
4. How do Cathy and Hareton interact before Nelly arrives? What relationship from their parents' generation does the pair seem to mimic?
5. What personality traits does Hareton reveal when addressed as a servant by Cathy? How does his class status parallel that of Heathcliff's?
6. In what way does Nelly focus on self-preservation during this chapter? Are her actions understandable or contemptible?

Chapter XIX

1. Characterize Linton Heathcliff. Which of his relatives does he resemble? How does Cathy respond to her cousin?
2. What reasons does Edgar offer to Joseph in an attempt to allow Linton to remain at Thrushcross Grange? How does Joseph regard those reasons?

Chapter XX

1. How does Nelly explain away Linton's lack of knowledge about his father?
2. What is Heathcliff's behavior and attitude toward his son? What purpose will Linton serve for him? How does this purpose fit in with a primary theme of the novel?
3. Characterize Nelly's behavior in coercing Linton to travel to Wuthering Heights and remain there. How do you think Brontë intended the reader to feel about Nelly's actions?

Chapter XXI

1. What conditions does Linton live under at Wuthering Heights according to servants there?
2. What characteristics of Cathy's lead to her encounter with Heathcliff?
3. What is Heathcliff's purpose in having Cathy visit Wuthering Heights? Is it odd that he confides his goals in Nelly?
4. "If Linton died," I answered, "and his life is quite uncertain, Catherine would be the heir." "No, she would not," he said. "There is no clause in the will to secure it so: his property would go to me: but, to prevent disputes, I desire their union, and am resolved to bring it about." What is the meaning of this exchange between Nelly and Heathcliff? How might Heathcliff know what is contained in Edgar's will? What literary device is employed?
5. What complex feelings does Heathcliff have towards Hareton? Why are his expectations concerning the boy satisfied?
6. What metaphor does Heathcliff use to compare Hareton and Linton? How does Heathcliff delight in this comparison?
7. What characteristics of Heathcliff does Linton exhibit towards Hareton? How does Nelly feel towards Linton?
8. Consider Nelly's handling of the love letters. Where do her loyalties and priorities seem to lie?

Chapter XXII

1. How has the end of Cathy's romance affected the girl? What compounds its effect?
2. Why does Cathy cry during her walk? How do her concerns fit in with a theme of the novel? How does Nelly calm her?
3. In what way does Heathcliff provide further evidence of his manipulative and vengeful nature during Chapter XXII?
4. What does Cathy persuade Nelly to accompany her in doing? How does Nelly's treatment of Cathy compare with her treatment of the child's mother, Catherine? What accounts for the difference?

Chapter XXIII

1. Analyze how Linton is becoming involved in his father's plans for revenge against Edgar. How is he able to manipulate Cathy?
2. How do the disputes of Cathy and Linton's parents affect the pair? Is the way their argument ends surprising?
3. In what ways do Nelly and Catherine's opinions of Linton and his illness differ?

4. "And he'll soon do as I direct him, with some slight coaxing. He's a pretty little darling when he's good. I'd make such a pet of him, if he were mine." (Pg. 204)

How does Cathy's attitude towards Linton, as expressed in the above quote, compare with her mother's relationship with Edgar?

Chapter XXIV

1. When do descriptions of the English countryside, a common element of Romanticism literature, become prominent in Chapter XXIV?

2. What cruelty does Cathy engage in towards Hareton? What are her true feelings toward him? Which relationship of their parents' generation does theirs parallel in some ways?

3. What violence does Cathy witness at Wuthering Heights? What are the probable underlying reasons for the attack? Who does Linton believe is to blame?

4. To what does Linton attribute his mistreatment of Cathy? Why is Heathcliff happy about Cathy's attitude toward the mistreatment?

5. How does Nelly's behavior in this chapter compare and contrast with her behavior in similar situations earlier in the novel? Why do you suppose she reacts the way she does to these particular events?

6. Who serves as the primary narrator of Chapter XXIV? Explain how the narrative form of this chapter fits in with the overall narrative structure of the novel.

Chapter XXV

1. How does Chapter XXV establish the time frame of the narrative? What is surprising about the timing of the events Nelly is currently describing?

2. In what way does Nelly hope Lockwood will become involved in the other characters' lives? Why does Lockwood doubt the idea?

3. What are Edgar's feelings regarding death? What are his primary concerns regarding Cathy?

4. Why does Edgar see it as favorable for Cathy to marry Linton in financial terms? How would knowledge of Linton's illness alter his opinion? How is Heathcliff's plan for revenge threatened by his son's impending death?

5. What foreshadowing is present at the close of Chapter XXV?

Chapter XXVI

1. Compare Linton's current condition to his previous condition. How does he behave oddly?

2. What does Cathy guess is the reason Linton insists on visiting with her? What hints does Linton give Cathy that helps her reach this conclusion?

Chapter XXVII

1. How is Edgar deceived about the true nature of Linton's character?

2. Why does Linton's behavior cause Cathy to grow so impatient with him?

3. What would be the implications for Heathcliff of Linton dying before Edgar?

4. In what way does Cathy challenge Heathcliff's power? What do her actions reveal about her character?

5. How do Heathcliff's vengeful actions in Chapter XXVII differ from those committed before? What continues to drive him? How may readers' feelings toward Heathcliff change during this chapter?

6. How does Brontë first arouse the reader's sympathy for Linton and then make his character unsympathetic in Chapter XXVII?

7. What is the tone of the story once Cathy and Nelly are inside Wuthering Heights?
8. "I seated myself in a chair, and rocked to and fro, passing harsh judgment on my many derelictions of duty; from which, it struck me then, all the misfortunes of my employers sprang." To what extent does this statement seem true or false? Has Nelly played a significant role in the misfortunes of her employers?

Chapter XXVIII

1. What rumor has been spread regarding Nelly and Cathy's disappearance?
2. What surprising behavior does Linton engage in towards Cathy? What character traits does Linton reveal through his behavior?
3. Why does Edgar endeavor to change his will, and how does he intend to alter it? Why does the attorney, Mr. Green, not come until after Edgar's death?
4. Describe how Cathy finally escapes. How does the manner of her escape fit into the motif of windows in the novel and relate back to Lockwood's dreams?

Chapter XXIX

1. What are Heathcliff's plans for Cathy? Why will he not allow her to stay at Thrushcross Grange?
2. According to Cathy, how will she and Linton have revenge against Heathcliff?
3. How does Heathcliff demonstrate the extremity of his obsession with Catherine? What are his own burial plans? Relate both to Romanticism and the Gothic novel.
4. How has Catherine's ghost continuously disappointed Heathcliff? Relate Heathcliff's experiences with Catherine's ghost to Lockwood's.

Chapter XXX

1. Contrast Zillah's attitude towards her duties as a housekeeper to Nelly's.
2. What are the financial implications of Linton's death? What effect do they have on Heathcliff's revenge plot?
3. How does Zillah's relationship with Cathy and Hareton in Chapter XXX parallel Nelly's relationship with the elder Catherine and Heathcliff?
4. What are the dynamics of Cathy and Hareton's relationship?
5. "At first, on hearing this account from Zillah, I determined to leave my situation, take a cottage, and get Catherine to come and live with me: but Mr. Heathcliff would as soon permit that as he would set up Hareton in an independent house; and I can see no remedy, at present unless she could marry again; and that scheme it does not come within my province to arrange." Consider the context of the above quote. Why are Nelly's words significant in light of her audience?

Chapter XXXI

1. What seem to be Hareton's motives for improving his reading skills? What is ironic about Cathy's response to them?
2. What disturbs Heathcliff about Hareton's appearance? What does Heathcliff mean when he says he might "thwart" himself?
3. How does Lockwood again exhibit his conceitedness? What does he reflect on while he leaves Wuthering Heights?

Chapter XXXII

1. How does the opening of this chapter remind the reader of an earlier chapter? What is the intended effect of the opening?
2. What signs of change does Lockwood encounter upon his arrival at Wuthering Heights?
3. How does Cathy endeavor to obtain Hareton's forgiveness? What earlier scene of the novel involved a request for forgiveness, and how do the two scenes compare?

Chapter XXXIII

1. How does Heathcliff learn about Hareton and Cathy's friendship? What is his response, and why does he appear to respond in that way?
2. What feelings does the sight of Cathy and Hareton reading together arouse in Heathcliff? In what way has Heathcliff changed?
3. What particularly does Hareton represent to Heathcliff?

Chapter XXXIV

1. What can the reader infer about Heathcliff's experience on the moors when he was out all night? How does the narrative form restrict the reader's knowledge of the event?
2. What does Heathcliff's rejection of Nelly's suggestion for a minister signify? What other matter does he raise in response?
3. What further suggestions of the supernatural occur upon Heathcliff's death?
4. How do windows and the weather arise again as a motif in the final chapter?
5. What final comments do Nelly and Lockwood make regarding the dead? How do they seem to fit in with the final events of the novel?
6. Consider the impending marriage of Hareton and Cathy. What is the significance of the union? How does it reflect on the rest of the novel?