

English 4 Honors

Summer Reading Questions: *Beowulf*, *Dracula*, *Into the Wild*

The following contains questions to help you in your understanding of your summer reading. During the course of the 2009-2010 year, we will study each of these: *Beowulf*, *Dracula*, and *Into the Wild*, so the summer reading activity is not a “meaningless activity”—you will be responsible for having completed these activities; these questions are a foundation upon which we will build.

Please read the introductions before each reading assignment; they explain how to approach the reading assignments. A quick overview is as follows:

Beowulf—Questions for Guided Reading and Annotation of the Text

Dracula—Study Guide Questions (Short Answers)

Into the Wild—Ten Short Essay Questions

Warning: Do not ignore nor wait until the last minute to do this work. Most English 4 Honors students who seek to find a fast route through this material or think that watching a movie is the same as reading the text tend to do poorly in the course. Those who read the actual texts and respond to the questions, reflecting on the answers, tend to do very well. As an honors class, it has been designed for students who enjoy reading and writing.

Unlike other texts assigned during the year, you will have read *Beowulf*, *Dracula*, and *Into the Wild* by the start of the fall semester; therefore, you will only have a few days to review these texts prior to our studying them in class. Please keep all questions and your responses so that you may refer to them when that time comes.

Dracula

Answer the following questions as you read *Dracula*. Some questions demand only a word, a phrase, or a simple sentence; others may require a few sentences. You are **not** required to write short essays. Do take the time to annotate / underline relevant passages from the novel if that would help further support or illustrate an answer.

Please note that we will be studying *Dracula* later in the year. I will assume, however, that at the start of the fall semester, you have read *Dracula* (not *Spark Notes* or a similar summary) and that you have answered these questions. Please keep a journal (handwritten or typed) to record your answers. You will be required to bring these questions and responses during the summer reading exams / activities check.

FYI —Reading *Spark Notes* and other such works might help you to a certain extent; however, they do not replace reading the novel. Furthermore, the following questions were generated by your NDP instructor and do not rely on any of these works; reading *Spark Notes* et al., may actually complicate this exercise. Also, several movies based on *Dracula* are interesting but none are faithful to the work—except, perhaps an old PBS version. At times

students become confused between the movie and the story, so make certain to focus on understanding the novel.

Chapter One—Jonathan Harker’s Journal

1. What direction is Jonathan Harker traveling? What is his destination?
2. How does the old woman who lives at the Golden Krone Hotel try to prevent Jonathan from continuing his journey to Castle Dracula? How does he respond to her warnings?
3. Originally published in 1897, *Dracula* reflects the traditions and customs of people living in that era. Some historians characterize English people in this time period as having a strong tradition of keeping detailed journals and writing descriptive letters. Find a passage in this chapter that illustrates the level of detail the reader can expect from the journal entries in this novel.
4. Science and technology were increasingly important to England at the turn of the century. Scientific, logical reasoning was prized and valued by the people of the time. What evidence is there that the people in Transylvania are superstitious and do not share Jonathan’s scientific thought processes?
5. Briefly describe the Count’s coachman. What can the reader infer about the coachman from his physical description and from the conversation with the diligence driver?
6. One technique a writer uses to add interest and suspense to a story is for the reader to understand more about the situation than the character. The literary term for this is dramatic irony. For example, Harker blames his bad dreams on the food, but the reader knows Jonathan’s dreams foreshadow ominous events to come. The reader understands that the coachman and Count Dracula are the same person and that Count Dracula is evil. List three more examples of dramatic irony in this chapter.
7. The natives of Transylvania are superstitious and believe in the supernatural, while Jonathan responds to each ominous incident in this first chapter with logic and reason. Based on this trend, state a possible theme for this novel.

Chapter II – Jonathan Harker’s Journal — continued

1. Physiognomy is the practice of trying to judge character and mental qualities by observing a person’s facial features and body, including a person’s hands. How does Jonathan describe the Count’s facial features and his hands? What can the reader infer about the Count’s character traits based on these descriptions?
2. What clues does Jonathan have that the Count and the coachman are possibly the same person?
3. Jonathan writes, “There are certainly odd deficiencies in the house, considering the extraordinary evidences of wealth...” What are some of these deficiencies?
4. Why does the Count want to have long conversations with Jonathan?
5. Why, according to the Count, does the coachman stop whenever he sees a blue flame?
6. What does the Count like about Carfax? Other than Carfax, where does the Count plan to have homes in England?
7. Jonathan notes in his journal that the Count never eats. What other peculiarities does he observe about the Count?
8. Why does Jonathan believe that the “castle is a veritable prison”?

Chapter III – Jonathan Harker’s Journal—continued

1. Jonathan decides to spy on the Count. What does Jonathan learn?
2. What weapons did the good people at Bristritz give to Jonathan to help protect him from the evil Count?
3. Jonathan records a portion of the Count's tale about Transylvania's history in his journal. As the Count speaks, Jonathan studies him. What is revealed about the Count's character while he talks?
4. Find two allusions in this chapter.
5. One of the themes of this novel is the conflict between the scientific Western cultures and the spiritual Eastern cultures. How do the allusions you found in question support this theme?
6. The Count wants Jonathan to stay at Castle Dracula for a month. Why does Jonathan agree to this request? The Count also orders Jonathan to write only about business matters in his letters, implying that the Count plans to read the letters before mailing them. How does Jonathan defy the Count's orders?
7. On page 37, Jonathan writes, "What manner of man is this, or what manner of creature, is it in the semblance of man? I feel the dread of this horrible place overpowering me; I am in fear—in awful fear—and there is no escape for me; I am encompassed about with terrors that I dare not think of..." What does Jonathan observe about the Count's behavior that finally convinces him that the Count is a "creature" rather than a man?
8. Some critics believe that one reason this novel has remained popular for so long is the sensual, sexual power of vampires. Find a passage in this chapter describing the three female vampires in a sensual manner.

Chapter IV – Jonathan Harker's Journal—Continued

1. Why does Jonathan write in his journal "I know now the span of my life. God help me!"
2. What happens to the letters Jonathan pays the gypsies to mail? Why does Count Dracula remove all of Jonathan's letters and papers while Jonathan is asleep?
3. What is the implied source of the treasures Jonathan finds in the Count's room?
4. In this chapter, Jonathan discovers more about the Count, his powers and weaknesses. List three powers and two weaknesses the Count possesses.
5. Some critics believe that in some ways the character of Count Dracula is an evil parallel to Christian beliefs. For example, as a vampire, Count Dracula drinks blood. Central to some Christian beliefs is the Eucharist, when bread and wine are consecrated and distributed as the body and blood of Jesus. In what other ways might the character of Count Dracula parallel Christian beliefs?

Chapter V – Letter from Miss Mina Murray to Miss Lucy Westenra.

1. An episodic novel is one that is made up of loosely connected incidents rather than an integrated plot. The first four chapters of this novel are from Jonathan Harker's journal writings, so they reflect his point of view. Chapter V consists of letters and diary entries from other characters. Why do you think Stoker switches narrators at this juncture?
2. In what sense is this chapter, when Mina and Lucy discuss Mina's relationship with Jonathan, an example of dramatic irony?

3. List three character traits for both Mina and Lucy. The reader understands that Dracula is headed for England. Which of these two women do you think might be more susceptible or vulnerable to Count Dracula and why?
4. Briefly describe the three men who propose to Lucy. Which proposal does she accept and why?

Chapter VI – Mina Murray’s Journal

1. What is the nature of Renfield’s madness? In what sense does Renfield’s madness parallel Count Dracula’s behavior?
2. Dr. Seward is tempted to give Renfield a cat just to observe what will happen next. Seward writes,

“He gave many flies to one spider and many spiders to one bird, and then wanted a cat to eat the many birds. What would have been his later steps? It would almost be worthwhile to complete the experiment. It might be done if there were only a sufficient cause. Men sneered at vivisection, and yet look at its results to-day! Why not advance science in its most difficult and vital aspect—the knowledge of the brain? Had I even the secret of one such mind—did I hold the key to the fancy of even one lunatic—I might advance my own branch of science to a pitch compared with which Burdon-Sanderson’s physiology or Ferrier’s brain-knowledge would be as nothing. If only there were a sufficient cause! I must not think too much of this, or I may be tempted; a good cause might turn the scale with me, for may not I too be of an exceptional brain, congenitally?”

One of the themes of this novel is that of madness, which threatens the lives of the sane. In what way does this passage suggest that madness is threatening Dr. Seward’s life?

3. What changes concerning Lucy does Mina note in her journal? In what ways do these changes parallel Count Dracula’s behavior?
4. The old man, Mr. Swales says, “There’s something in that wind and in the coast beyond that sounds, and looks, and tastes, and smells like death. It’s in the air; I feel it comin’. Lord, make me answer cheerful when my call comes!” What does this passage seem to be foreshadowing?

Chapter VII – Cutting from “The Dailygraph,” 8 August

1. In this chapter the reader learns more about Dracula’s powers. What three powers, not previously mentioned, does Dracula use to destroy the crew of the Demeter?
2. The following excerpt from this chapter describes Mr. Swales’ dead body. “...old Mr. Swales was found dead this morning on our seat, his neck being broken. He had evidently, as the doctor said, fallen back in the seat in some sort of fright, for there was a look of fear and horror on his face that the men said made them shudder. Poor dear old man! Perhaps he had seen Death with his dying eyes!” What does this passage imply about the cause of Mr. Swales’ death?
3. In her journal, Mina records her observations of Lucy’s behavior. List two observations Mina makes which suggest to the reader that Lucy is in some way connected to Dracula.

Chapter VIII – Mina Murry’s Journal

1. The settings for in this story help to advance the story’s plot and themes. For example, Dracula’s new home in England is next door to an insane asylum. This proximity helps Stoker advance the theme of madness in this novel. Why do you suppose the incident with Dracula and Lucy takes place on Lucy and Mina’s seat near the graveyard?

2. Why do you think Stoker includes the letter from Samuel F. Billington & Son in this chapter?
3. What new information does Mina receive regarding Jonathan Harker?
4. What evidence is there in this chapter that Renfield is connected to Dracula?
5. Gothic fiction is characterized as having a picturesque setting, dealing with the supernatural in some way, exploring the conflict between good and evil, and usually involving the corruption of lower-class females by aristocratic males. Cite incidents from the story that support the four criteria for Gothic fiction.

Chapter IX – Letter, Mina Harker to Lucy Westenra.

1. Why does Jonathan give Mina his journal? What does Mina plan to do with the journal?
2. Jonathan is worried about the return of the brain fever. Which theme of this story does this incident support?
3. Where does Renfield go when he escapes?
4. Why does Dr. Seward send for Professor Van Helsing of Amsterdam? What conclusions does Professor Van Helsing make concerning Lucy's condition?
5. Why is Arthur separated from Lucy during her illness? For what reason must Lucy hide her illness from her mother?
6. Dr. Seward uses his powers of observation to try and diagnose Renfield. What conclusion does he draw about the effect of the sun on Renfield? In what sense is this conclusion an example of dramatic irony?

Chapter X – Letter, Dr. Seward to Hon. Arthur Holmwood.

1. One of the themes in this book is that the scientific, logical methods of the West are insufficient to recognize the nature of supernatural evil. Man must combine both the folklore and superstitions of the East with the logic of the West to fight Dracula. What evidence is there in this chapter that Van Helsing suspects Lucy is the victim of a vampire? In what ways does he employ both the logic of science and the knowledge of folklore to try to save her?
2. Van Helsing is an important character in the story. Through him, Stoker makes observations about life. For example, Van Helsing is cautioning Seward to take careful notes because "...knowledge is stronger than memory, and we should not trust the weaker." Find one additional example of Van Helsing's observations or generalizations about life.
3. What is the meaning of the following metaphor from Chapter X? "My friend John, when the corn is grown, even before it has ripened—while the milk of its mother-earth is in him, and the sunshine has not yet begun to paint him with his gold, the husbandman he pull the ear and rub him between his rough hands, and blow away the green chaff, and say to you: "Look! he's good corn; he will make good crop when the time comes.' ...The good husbandman tell you so then because he knows, but not till then. But you do not find the good husbandman dig up his planted corn to see if he grow; that is for the children who play at husbandry, and not for those who take it as of the work of their life. ...I have sown my corn, and Nature has her work to do in making it sprout; if he sprout at all, there's some promise; and I wait till the ear begins to swell."

Chapter XI – Lucy Westenra’s Diary

1. Why does the wolf smash through the glass of Lucy’s window?
2. What is Van Helsing’s response when he realizes that Mrs. Westenra has unwittingly placed Lucy in danger by removing the garlic flowers from her neck and opening the window? What is Seward’s reaction?
3. After her mother’s death, Lucy discovers that the servants have been drugged. She is afraid to go out because of the howling of the wolf. What action does she take, believing, as she does, that she may not survive the night?

Chapter XII – Dr. Seward’s Diary

1. Who are the four men who give Lucy blood transfusions?
2. What differences do Van Helsing and Seward notice in Lucy while sleeping and when she is awake?
3. Why do you suppose Stoker includes in this chapter the incident where Renfield escapes and pulls one of the boxes off the cart?
4. Just before her death, how does Lucy’s physical appearance and her behavior change?
5. Why does Van Helsing prevent Arthur from kissing Lucy one last time?
6. In what way does Lucy’s appearance change after her death?
7. The author’s skill at building suspense is key to the success of a thriller like *Dracula*. One method of building suspense is by foreshadowing events to come. Stoker often foreshadows future events at the end of his chapters. What future event is foreshadowed at the end of this chapter?

Chapter XIII – Dr. Seward’s Diary—continued.

1. What does the Professor want to do to Lucy’s body after the funeral? Why does he decide to postpone the procedure?
2. For what reasons do you think the Professor asks for Lord Godalming’s permission to read Lucy’s letters and papers?
3. How does Jonathan react when he thinks he sees the Count in the park?
4. What is the nature of the Hampstead Mystery reported in “The Westminster Gazette”?
5. What can the reader infer about Lucy from this mystery?

Chapter XIV – Mina Harker’s Journal

1. Mina is disturbed by Jonathan’s reaction when he sees Dracula. List three actions she takes in this chapter to try and help Jonathan.
2. Van Helsing and Dr. Seward have a conversation about the puncture wounds on the necks of the lost children. Dr. Seward concludes that the children are being attacked by the same attacker as Lucy, but Professor Helsing tries to get Dr. Seward to see another possibility. What flaw in modern science does Professor Helsing point out to Dr. Seward in this conversation? Find a quote that shows Helsing’s point. Identify the literary term used in the quotation. What thesis is the professor trying to get Dr. Seward to believe in?

Chapter XV – Dr. Seward’s Diary—Continued

1. Find two passages on the first page of this chapter that support the theme of madness in this novel.
2. What four actions or steps does Professor Helsing take to help Dr. Seward accept the truth of Lucy's behavior?
3. How does Van Helsing plan to kill Lucy now that she is one of the Un-Dead?
4. For what reason does Van Helsing decide to put off killing Lucy until he can convince Arthur that she is one of the Un-Dead?
5. Arthur is upset when Van Helsing tells him about his plans for Lucy's body. He considers it his duty to protect Lucy's body from mutilation. List two arguments Van Helsing uses to persuade Arthur to come with him to Lucy's tomb.

Chapter XVI – Dr. Seward's Diary—continued.

1. How is Arthur convinced that Lucy is Un-Dead and must be killed?
2. List three reasons Lucy must be killed. For what reasons is Arthur the one who drives the stake into Lucy?
3. In earlier chapters, incidents suggested an evil parallel between Dracula and Christianity. Read the following excerpts from this chapter which refer to Christianity or Christian symbols and practices. Based on these passages, what do you think the role of Christianity and Christian values might be for the remainder of the book?

“He crumbled the wafer up fine and worked it into the mass between his hands. This he then took, and rolling it into thin strips, began to lay them into the crevices between the door and its setting in the tomb.”

“As for Arthur, he seemed under a spell; moving his hands from his face, he opened wide his arms. She was leaping for them, when Van Helsing sprang forward and held between them his little golden crucifix. She recoiled from it, and, with a suddenly distorted face, full of rage, dashed past him as if to enter the tomb.”

“But of the most blessed of all, when this now Un-Dead be made to rest as true dead, then the soul of the poor lady whom we love shall again be free. In stead of working wickedness by night and growing more debased in the assimilating of it by day, she shall take her place with the other Angels.”
4. At the end of this chapter, Van Helsing says, “Now, my friends, one step of our work is done...” What is the next step in their work?
5. The overall theme of this book is the conflict between good and evil. At this point in the story what tools are available to the good men who are trying to fight Dracula?

Chapter XVI I – Seward’s Diary—continued.

1. Before Chapter XVI I , the reader knows more about the events in the story than the characters in the story. Through their journal entries, the reader knows all, but the participants only understand pieces of the story. The structure of the novel supports this dramatic irony. What indications are there in this chapter that Stoker’s liberal use of dramatic irony to add suspense and interest to the story is going to come to an end?
2. In what way does Mina help Arthur?

Chapter XVI I I – Dr. Seward’s Diary

1. Why does Mina ask to see Renfield? In what ways does his behavior change in her presence?
2. As Mina finishes her visit with Renfield, she says, “Good-bye, and I hope I may see you often, under auspices pleasanter to yourself,” to which, to my [Dr. Seward’s] astonishment, he replied: — “Good-bye, my dear. I pray God I may never see your sweet face again. May He bless and keep you!” Why do you suppose Renfield prays he will never see Mina again?
3. The Professor describes Mina in the following passage:

“Ah, that wonderful Madam Mina! She has man’s brain—a brain that a man should have were he much gifted—and a woman’s heart. The good God fashioned her for a purpose, believe me, when He made that so good combination. Friend John, up to now fortune had made that woman of help to us; after to-night she must not have to do with this so terrible affair. It is not good that she run a risk so great. We men are determined—nay, are we not pledged—to destroy this monster; but it is no part for a woman. Even if she be not harmed, her heart may fail her in so much and so many horrors; and hereafter she may suffer—both in waking, from her nerves, and in sleep, from her dreams. And, besides, she is young woman and not so long married; there may be other things to think of some time, if not now. You tell me she has wrote all, then she must consult with us; but to-morrow she say good-bye to this work, and we go alone.”

One overall theme of this novel is the conflict between good and evil. Understanding this theme and based on the Professor’s words, why do you think Mina is described in this way? What does this description imply or foreshadow about the events yet to come?

4. Briefly summarize the characteristics or powers a vampire like Dracula possesses.
5. Briefly summarize the powers the Professor and the others have to fight Dracula.
6. List ten of Dracula’s limitations.
7. Briefly describe the kind of man Dracula was before he became a vampire.
8. What is Van Helsing’s plan to kill Dracula?
9. In the following passage Renfield begs Dr. Seward to release him from the asylum. “You don’t know what you do by keeping me here. I am speaking from the depths of my heart, of my very soul. You don’t know whom you wrong, or how; and I may not tell. Woe is me! I may not tell. By all you hold sacred—by all you hold dear—by your love that is lost—by your hope that lives—for the sake of the Almighty, take me out of this and save my soul from guilt!” What possible future guilt do you think Renfield is referring to in this passage?

Chapter XIX – Jonathan Harker’s Journal

1. What do the men encounter when they open the door to the chapel at Carfax? How many boxes are left? How many are missing?
2. A good novel must be believable both in terms of the novel’s plot and in the actions of the characters. The reader understands that Dracula is infecting Mina. Jonathan notes that Mina “looks paler than usual” and like someone “who has been waked out of a bad dream.” These observations, coupled with Renfield’s strange behavior, lead the reader to understand that Mina is coming under Dracula’s power; yet, Mina herself is unaware of this influence. Discuss whether or not you find her ignorance of Dracula’s presence in her life to be believable.
3. For what reasons does Mina regret taking a sleeping opiate?

Chapter XX – Jonathan Harker’s Journal

1. What information does Jonathan learn concerning the whereabouts of the boxes missing from Carfax? Why does he come to believe that it is important that all of the boxes be destroyed quickly?
2. Renfield and Dr. Seward talk at length about souls in this chapter. What conclusions does Dr. Seward draw from Renfield’s ravings?
3. Find a passage in this chapter which supports the theme of madness.
4. In the following excerpt from Dr. Seward’s diary, Renfield is talking about souls.
“To hell with you and your souls!” he shouted. “Why do you plague me about souls! Haven’t I got enough to worry, and pain, to distract me already, without thinking of souls!” He looked so hostile that I thought he was in for another homicidal fit, so I blew my whistle. The instant, however, that I did so he became calm, and said apologetically:—“Forgive me, Doctor; I forgot myself. You do not need any help. I am so worried in my mind that I am apt to be irritable. If you only knew the problem I have to face, and that I am working out, you would pity, and tolerate, and pardon me.”

What problem do you think Renfield is trying to work out?

Chapter XXI – Dr. Seward’s Diary

1. Why does Renfield agree to invite Dracula into the asylum?
2. What does Renfield say that implies Dracula has been in contact with Mrs. Harker?
3. For what reasons does Renfield decide to fight Dracula rather than worship him?
4. Dracula needs to drink blood; why then do you think he does not drink Renfield’s blood?
5. How does Dracula force Mina to drink his blood and what power will he then have over her?
6. Find a passage in this story that supports the motif of Christianity in this story.

Chapter XXI I – Jonathan Harker’s Journal

1. Briefly describe the plan to destroy Dracula’s boxes.
2. Why is Mina’s forehead burned by the Sacred Wafer? What vow, out of his love, does Jonathan make after Mina’s forehead is burned?
3. For what reason are Van Helsing and Seward disappointed when they search the Picadilly house?

Chapter XXIII – Dr. Seward’s Diary

1. Dr. Seward tells Jonathan Harker that in life Dracula was a learned scientist with a powerful brain. After Dracula dies and becomes a vampire, he retains his powerful brain, but in many ways is like a growing, experimenting child. In what ways does Dr. Seward think Dracula is experimenting and growing?
2. In the house at Picadilly, the men face Dracula during the daytime, when his powers are limited to those of man. Why are they still unable to apprehend him?
3. The Count, after leaping from the window, turns and speaks. What evil is the Count threatening? What does Van Helsing learn about the Count from these threats? “You think to baffle me, you—with your pale faces all in a row, like sheep in a butcher’s. You shall be sorry yet, each one of you! You think you have left me without a place to

rest; but I have more. My revenge is just begun! I spread it over centuries, and time is on my side. Your girls that you all love are mine already; and through them you and others shall be mine—my creatures, to do my bidding and to be my jackals when I want to feed. Bah!”

4. Why, in the following excerpt, does Mina plead for pity for Dracula? What is Jonathan’s reaction to her plea? “That poor soul who has wrought all this misery is the saddest case of all. Just think what will be his joy when he, too, is destroyed in his worser part that his better part may have spiritual immortality. You must be pitiful to him, too, though it may not hold your hands from his destruction.”
5. What information about Dracula is Mina able to provide under hypnosis? Why is it imperative that Van Helsing and the others continue the hunt for Dracula?

Chapter XXIV – Dr. Seward’s Phonograph Diary, Spoken By Van Helsing

1. Van Helsing is worried about Mina because he observes that she is “changing.” List three ways Mina is changing. What action does Van Helsing propose because of these changes?
2. Why does Qunicey Morris want to pack Winchesters for the trip?
3. For what reasons does Mina believe the group must take her with them to Varna?
4. Briefly describe Van Helsing’s plan to stop Dracula once the group boards the ship.

Chapter XXV – Dr. Seward’s Diary

1. What promise does Mina ask from all five men, including her husband Jonathan? What special request does she have for her husband?
2. Why does Van Helsing believe the Count no longer wants Mina? In the following passage, Van Helsing discusses the “error” he thinks Dracula has made. Base your answers to the following two questions on this excerpt:

“He [Dracula] has so used your [Mina’s] mind; and by it he has left us here in Varna, whilst the ship that carried him rushed through enveloping fog up to Galatz, where, doubtless, he had made preparation for escaping from us. But his child-mind only saw so far; and it may be that, as ever is in God’s Providence, the very thing that the evil-doer most reckoned on for his selfish good, turns out to be his chiefest harm. The hunter is taken in his own snare, as the great Psalmist says. For now that he thinks he is free from every trace of us all, and that he has escaped us with so many hours to him, then his selfish child-brain will whisper to him to sleep. He think, too, that as he cut himself off from knowing your mind, there can be no knowledge of him to you; there is where he fail! That terrible baptism of blood which he give you makes you free to go to him in spirit, as you have as yet done in your times of freedom, when the sun rise and set. At such times you go by my volition and not by his; and this power too good of you and others, you have won from your suffering at his hands. This is now all more precious that he know it not, and to guard himself have even cut himself off from his knowledge of our whereabouts. We, however, are not selfish, and we believe that God is with us through all this blackness, and these many dark hours.”

What is Dracula’s error?

Which theme from the story does this passage help to illustrate?

Chapter XXVI – Dr. Seward’s Diary

1. Why does Dracula kill Petrof Skinsky?
2. For what reasons does Mina conclude that Dracula must be in an open boat on either the Pruth or the Sereth rivers?
3. Briefly outline the plan Van Helsing and the others construct to find Dracula.

Chapter XXVII – Mina Harker’s Journal

1. What changes does Van Helsing note in Mina as they travel in Dracula’s country?
2. Why does Van Helsing make a ring of wafer around Mina?
3. What choice must Van Helsing make for Mina the morning he goes into Count Dracula’s castle?
4. What does Van Helsing do in Dracula’s Castle?
5. Why do the characters in the story feel a sense of urgency to kill Dracula quickly?
6. The blows that kill Dracula are described below:

“But, on the instant, came the sweep and flash of Jonathan’s great knife. I [Mina] shrieked as I saw it shear through the throat; whilst at the same moment Mr. Morris’s bowie knife plunged into the heart. It was like a miracle; but before our very eyes, and almost in the drawing of a breath, the whole body crumbled into dust and passed from our sight.”

Some critics believe that the way Dracula is killed is inconsistent with the methods for killing a vampire that are described in earlier chapters of the book. For what reasons do you think Dracula’s death is or is not inconsistent?

7. Find a passage in this chapter that supports the theme of Christian redemption.
8. For what reasons does Quincey die a happy man? How do Mina and Jonathan honor his memory?