

# “Dr. Heidegger’s Experiment” Questions

1. What is the destructive vice of each of the following characters?
  - a. Medbourne
  - b. Colonel Killigrew
  - c. Gascogne
  - d. Widow Wicherly
2. What connection is there between all three men and the widow?
3. Heidegger’s study could be considered an evil setting. Identify at least two specific elements that prove this.
4. Who is Sylvia Ward? What is her role in this experiment?
5. What kind of man is Dr. Heidegger? Explain your answer with specifics from the story. (Remember indirect characterization: STEAL)
6. What happens to each of the guests as he/she drinks the water? Include physical and behavioral changes.
  - a. Medbourne
  - b. Colonel Killigrew
  - c. Gascogne
  - d. Widow Wicherly

7. Give two examples of the real nature of the guests despite their youthful appearance.
8. Cite evidence of Dr. Heidegger's apparent satisfaction with his own life.
9. Have the four friends learned anything from the experiment? How do you know?
10. What is Hawthorne's message or theme?
11. In what ways is this story a good example of Anti-Transcendental beliefs?
12. Read about allegory and symbolism below from page 339 in the Prentice Hall Literature book and answer the following questions:

*"A parable is a simple, usually brief, story that teaches a moral lesson. Unlike a fable, which features animal characters, a parable is populated by human beings. A parable is a type of allegory – a story with both a literal and a symbolic meaning." Hawthorne often wrote in both allegories and parables, indicating that "the moral message [his writing] conveys is important. As you read, think about the lesson Hawthorne wants his story to communicate."*

*The rose that Dr. Heidegger brings back to life is a symbol – "something that has meaning in itself while also standing for something greater. To understand the message expressed in Hawthorne's [writing], you must analyze the [rose's] symbolic meaning, which is revealed" throughout the story. To discover the rose's symbolic meaning, notice Hawthorne's descriptions of the rose and its effects on the characters and the story.*

- a. In what ways does this allegory convey the message that people possess the potential for both good and evil?
- b. As the story draws to a close, Dr. Heidegger makes the following observation about the rose: "I love it as well thus as in its dewy freshness," observed he, pressing the withered rose to his withered lips." What does this statement suggest about the rose's symbolic importance?