

Gilded Age & Kate Chopin online "Discussion"

Today, you will engage in an online discussion through turnitin.com.

- Step one:** sign into turnitin.com and find the "Discussion" tab on the top of the page.
Step two: follow the instructions below depending on where your last name falls in the alphabet.
Step three: make sure you read the instructions thoroughly on the turnitin.com discussion tab.

If your last name begins with A-F you will read the information at [this site](#), take notes in your notebook, find another piece of evidence regarding women in the Gilded Age, and answer the prompt on turnitin.com under #1.

If your last name begins with G-L, you will read the information at [this site](#), take notes in your notebook, and answer the prompt on turnitin.com under #2.

If your last name begins with M-R, you will answer the odd questions below in your notebook and answer the prompt on turnitin.com under #3. (You may need to read the story first – it is attached on our website.)

If your last name begins with S-Z, you will answer the even questions below in your notebook and answer the prompt on turnitin.com under #4. (You may need to read the story first – it is attached on our website.)

Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour"

Interpreting

1. At the beginning of the story, when Chopin states that Mrs. Mallard "was afflicted with a heart trouble," she seems to be referring to a medical problem. Considering Mrs. Mallard's response to her husband's death, what other meaning to you think this statement might have?
2. How do the details of the scene outside Mrs. Mallard's room foreshadow the feelings that gradually sweep over Mrs. Mallard as she sits in her armchair?
3. What has Mrs. Mallard apparently resented about her marriage?
4. Why do you think Chopin chooses to reveal little about Mrs. Mallard's personality aside from her feelings concerning her marriage, her husband, and her independence?
5. What do you think is the actual reason for Mrs. Mallard's death?
6. What do you think is the significance of the story's title?
7. What is the nature of Mrs. Mallard's "heart trouble," and why would the author mention it in the first paragraph? Is there any way in which this might be considered symbolic or ironic?
8. The setting of the story is very limited; it is confined largely to a room, a staircase, and a front door. How does this limitation help to express the themes of the story?
9. In what ways is this passage significant? "She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves." What kinds of sensory images does this passage contain, and what senses does it address? What does the vision through the open window mean to her? Where else does she taste, smell, or touch something intangible in the story?
10. What kind of relationships do the Mallards have? Is Brently Mallard unkind to Louise Mallard, or is there some other reason for her saying "free, free, free!" when she hears of his death? How does she feel about him?
11. Mrs. Mallard closes the door to her room so that her sister Josephine cannot get in, yet she leaves the window open. Why does Chopin make a point of telling the reader this? How might this relate to the idea of being "free" and to the implicit idea that she is somehow imprisoned? Do other words in the story relate to this idea?
12. What does Josephine represent in the story? What does Richards represent?
13. Mrs. Mallard is described as descending the stairs "like a goddess of Victory." In what ways does she feel herself victorious?
14. The last line of the story is this: "When the doctors came they said she had died of heart disease-of joy that kills." In what ways is this an ironic statement? What is gained by having the doctors make such a statement rather than putting it in the mouths of Josephine or Richards?
15. What view of marriage does the story present? The story was published in 1894; does it only represent attitudes toward marriage in the nineteenth century, or could it equally apply to attitudes about marriage today?
16. If this is, in some sense, a story about a symbolic journey, where does Mrs. Mallard "travel"?