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## Close Reading Organizer - Section 7 **Sample** **Answers**

**Directions:** Read each summary entry and think about which themes listed in the Themes Key apply to it, then color in those themes in the Theme Tracker. Next, write a few sentences of Analysis to explain how the themes you chose apply to each summary section.

Note: There is not always a definitive set of “correct” answers for which themes should appear in the Theme Tracker. Answers that differ from the ones we propose below should therefore not automatically be treated as incorrect, and in fact can serve as great discussion starters.

### Themes Key

1	Privacy, Loneliness, and Communication
2	Social Criticism
3	Time
4	Psychology and Perception
5	Death

Summary	Theme Tracker					Your Analysis
The narrative switches to <b>Lucrezia</b> (Rezia), who sees the same <b>old woman singing</b> . At first she pities the woman just as <b>Peter</b> did, but when she hears “if some one should see, what matter they?” she suddenly feels like everything will be all right, and that her own unhappiness is just a “silly dream.” She is hopeful that <b>Sir William Bradshaw</b> will cure <b>Septimus</b> .	1	2	3	4	5	Rezia is an outsider to the patriarchal English society, so she must take her comforts where she can and she engages with the woman’s song. Rezia has been painfully aware of others’ eyes since Septimus got sick, and the old woman’s confident words comfort her. The words also resonate with Clarissa’s (future) ideas on the privacy of the soul, and the old woman in the window.
Meanwhile <b>Septimus</b> feels that he carries the “greatest message in the world” and is also both the	1	2	3	4	5	This is the most conventional section of the novel stylistically, where Woolf reveals Septimus’s

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<p>happiest and most miserable of men. The narrative steps back to describe Septimus's appearance and backstory. Before the war Septimus was an aspiring poet, and he fell in love with <b>Miss Isabel Pole</b>. She was a woman who gave lectures about Shakespeare, and she would edit Septimus's love poems to her while carefully ignoring their subject matter.</p>						<p>backstory with no free indirect discourse or stream of consciousness. We see another parallel between Septimus and Clarissa in the importance of Shakespeare and poetry to their lives.</p>
<p><b>Mr. Brewer</b>, who was <b>Septimus's</b> boss at the time and the managing clerk of "Sibleys and Arrowsmiths, auctioneers, valuers, land and estate agents," thought that Septimus had potential to rise in his field if he could keep his health. Mr. Brewer recommended that Septimus play football to grow stronger and healthier. Then World War I had begun, and Septimus enlisted. He went to France, hoping to save an England composed "almost entirely of Shakespeare's plays and <b>Miss Isabel Pole</b>."</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Septimus's youthful idealism and hope was a reflection of pre-War Europe, which had never experienced such a concentration of enormous numbers of casualties before World War I. Mr. Brewer is another kind of "English gentleman" like Hugh Whitbread, and both are irrelevant to the modern age.</p>
<p><b>Septimus</b> distinguished himself in battle, and then became very close with his officer, <b>Evans</b>. The two were almost inseparable, but when Evans was killed (just before Armistice Day) Septimus could feel nothing. He was frightened</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>We learn very little about Septimus's war experience or his relationship with Evans, but the former was clearly traumatizing and the latter clearly emotionally important.</p>

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by this, and began to think that there was a fatal flaw in his soul.						
<b>Septimus</b> was billeted in Milan when he met <b>Rezia</b> , who made hats with her sisters. Rezia fell in love with Septimus and he thought her pretty, clever, and interesting, but he still could feel nothing. He married her to try and make up for his lack of emotion. He then returned to England with her and was decorated for his bravery at war.	1	2	3	4	5	The feeling of numbness is a common symptom of PTSD, but no one understood this ailment at the time and could explain it to Septimus. His war decorations then seem supremely hollow considering how the war ruined his life.
<b>Septimus</b> returned to reading Shakespeare, but now he felt that “Shakespeare loathed humanity,” and that this loathing was in all of his writings. He found this same hatred in other great writers as well. All the while <b>Rezia</b> made hats and was happy with Septimus, as she liked his seriousness. Soon Rezia wanted to have children, but Septimus found sexual intercourse to be abominable. He did not want to bring children into the cruel world or pass along his own suffering.	1	2	3	4	5	There is a tragic disconnect between Septimus’s inner life and Rezia’s, and we see the great gulf that Clarissa will describe as existing even between husband and wife. As his mental illness increases, Septimus comes to think of human nature as a repulsive, evil thing.
<b>Septimus</b> would watch <b>Rezia</b> make hats and think about how humans had no real compassion for each other. He had talked to <b>Mr. Brewer</b> , who complained that the war ruined his	1	2	3	4	5	We now see just how harmful a “gentleman” like Mr. Brewer can be. He takes no interest in the poor, the countries oppressed by the British Empire, or the soldiers suffering to

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geraniums and frightened his cook. Septimus would think of all the suffering in the world and worry that he would go mad.						preserve his comfortable lifestyle.
One day <b>Rezia</b> cried for the first time in their marriage, and she said she wanted children and was unhappy. <b>Septimus</b> still couldn't feel anything, and after this his illness grew more severe, and he would not leave his bed. Rezia sent for the local <b>Dr. Holmes</b> to treat him. Dr. Holmes said that nothing was wrong with Septimus – he was just “in a funk” and needed to get out more or pick up a hobby.	1	2	3	4	5	Dr. Holmes is the epitome of the useless, harmful doctor, a man like Hugh or Brewster who is totally incapable of dealing with anything outside the sphere of English convention. Holmes has absolutely no understanding of depression or trauma, and gives no credit to it.
<b>Septimus</b> did not improve, and he sometimes threatened suicide. <b>Dr. Holmes</b> kept visiting him, but was always convinced that Septimus had nothing the matter with him. Septimus came to associate Holmes with the “repulsive brute” of human nature, and he longed to escape him, but felt that he had been condemned to death for being unable to feel.	1	2	3	4	5	Holmes actually contributes to Septimus's mental illness, reinforcing his ideas about the repulsiveness and idiocy of human nature. Instead of being treated for his emotional numbness, Septimus is allowed to continue thinking of it as an unpardonable crime.
<b>Septimus</b> felt that the whole world wanted him to kill himself, but he didn't want to kill himself yet. It was then that he started hearing and seeing <b>Evans</b> . <b>Rezia</b> was frightened that Septimus was talking to	1	2	3	4	5	The lack of communication between Septimus and Dr. Holmes is both infuriating and tragic. The worst part of Septimus's situation is that he cannot communicate his inner turmoil to anyone, even

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himself, and she sent for Dr. Holmes, but Septimus cursed at him. Dr. Holmes suggested that if the Smiths no longer had confidence in him, then they should visit a specialist named <b>Sir William Bradshaw</b> .						Rezia. We see more foreshadowings of suicide, but there is further tragedy in the fact that Septimus doesn't actually want to die.
Back in the present <b>Big Ben</b> tolls twelve o'clock, <b>Clarissa</b> lays her green dress on her bed, and <b>Septimus</b> and <b>Rezia</b> arrive for their appointment at <b>Sir William Bradshaw's</b> residence. Sir William is a psychiatrist who is famous for his tact and understanding. He has an expensive gray car and attends parties with the rich and famous in between treating his wealthy, troubled patients. He is an older man and has been knighted for his services to the people of England.	1	2	3	4	5	Woolf gives a swift link between Clarissa and Septimus by juxtaposing their actions at noon. Clarissa finishes mending her green dress and is now ready to face society, while Septimus is naked and exposed to society's condemnation as he enters Sir William's residence. Woolf's treatment of Sir William is full of searing sarcasm.
<b>Septimus</b> and <b>Rezia</b> arrive and <b>Sir William</b> quickly diagnoses Septimus as in a state of "complete breakdown." Sir William laments that the couple has been trusting <b>Dr. Holmes</b> for so long. Sir William asks Septimus if he served with "great distinction" in the war, and Septimus can't even remember, though he remembers the war as a "little shindy of schoolboys	1	2	3	4	5	Sir William is at least right to recognize that Septimus does have a problem, which is much better than Dr. Holmes did. The young Septimus had idealized reasons for fighting in the war, but now he cannot even remember why he suffered so much. Septimus has lost faith in England, and so cannot feel the pride that Rezia feels in his "distinction."

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with gunpowder.” Rezia answers for him, saying that Septimus was indeed a war hero.						
<b>Septimus</b> tries to confess to <b>Sir William</b> that he has committed a crime against human nature, but <b>Rezia</b> assures the doctor that this isn’t true. Sir William takes Rezia aside and tells her that Septimus is very ill. He asks if Septimus has threatened suicide, and she admits that he has. Sir William says that Septimus must be separated from Rezia and sent to rest in a “beautiful house in the country.” Sir William prefers not to talk of madness, but simply a lack of proportion.	1	2	3	4	5	Septimus is once again unable to communicate his true feelings, and the well-meaning Rezia talks over him. She is still acutely aware of society’s judgment, and wants to minimize the “embarrassment” of Septimus’s mental illness. We now start to see Sir William’s “obscurely evil” nature – he is not interested in hearing Septimus’s words, but only in sending him away.
<b>Rezia</b> is very upset by this, and when they give this news to <b>Septimus</b> he is wary of <b>Sir William</b> ’s “home.” Sir William resents Septimus’s distrust, as Sir William is the son of a tradesman and lacks the natural cultivation and bookishness Septimus still retains. Septimus adds “Bradshaw” (along with <b>Holmes</b> ) to his idea of the human nature that tortures and condemns him.	1	2	3	4	5	Sir William’s condemnation of Septimus has notes of jealousy in it, as Septimus has a natural intelligence, is well-read, and dares to question Sir William’s authority. Septimus has seen the worst side of human nature in the war, and now he comes to associate doctors with that same nature – torturing and killing for no good reason.
<b>Sir William</b> tells <b>Septimus</b> that everyone has times of depression, but that no one lives for himself alone. He reminds	1	2	3	4	5	Once again Septimus is unable to express his thoughts, and Sir William isn’t even interested in hearing them. The doctor

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Septimus that he has a brilliant career ahead of him. Septimus tries to confess his crime and reveal the message the voices told him to transmit, but he cannot remember anything. Sir William tells <b>Rezia</b> that he will make all the arrangements for Septimus's treatment and he dismisses the couple. Rezia is very upset and thinks that Sir William has failed them, and is "not a nice man."						has a "one size fits all" approach for psychology, and if anyone doesn't conform to his ideas he automatically sends them away to be isolated and weakened. Rezia has a natural distrust of Sir William because of her love for Septimus and his individuality.
The narrator expands on <b>Sir William's</b> philosophy of "proportion." Sir William prescribes isolation, rest, and lots of food for the mentally ill, and he forbids them from having children. Sir William has grown so famous that his sense of "proportion" has affected all of England, and if anyone doesn't conform to his views then they are considered mad.	1	2	3	4	5	Woolf saves her most searing criticisms of the novel for Sir William, and it is clear that she has a personal grudge against doctors like this, who force their patients into their conceptions of conformity rather than truly engaging with them as individuals. Woolf herself suffered from mental illness and was also a very individual, non-conforming soul, so she often had to put up a front to avoid being condemned by people like Sir William.
The narrator says that Proportion has a sinister "sister," though, which is Conversion. This pressure to conform to social norms or religion can masquerade as charity or self-sacrifice, but in reality it is a quest for power. In English colonies like India this leads to the literal	1	2	3	4	5	Woolf spends a lot of time condemning conversion (whether to religion or conformity), as this is the greatest threat to the privacy of the soul that she holds so dear. In this way Sir William will connect to Doris Kilman later, and both are microcosms of the machine of the British



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smashing up of idols, and in London <b>Sir William</b> goes about “colonizing” his patients’ minds and converting them to Proportion.						Empire, destroying the individuality and “privacy” of its colonized nations.
<b>Sir William’s</b> wife, <b>Lady Bradshaw</b> , is an example of this, as she once had a life of her own but it was subsumed into her husband’s will fifteen years before. With all his mentally ill patients Sir William eventually overcomes their will and converts them to his worldview. When they ask for a reason to live or if God exists, he suggests that they are simply lacking a sense of proportion – they should live for worldly success, and if they cannot have that then they should accept what they have got.	1	2	3	4	5	Sir William’s sense of proportion has become like a fundamentalist religion to him, and he is in a position of power to instill it into his helpless, mentally ill patients. If a patient asks something too philosophical – about God, their own individuality, or their power over their own life – he reinforces his dogma and insists they “convert” to his worldview.
If the patients will not be converted and retain their “unsocial impulses,” then <b>Sir William</b> has them sent away. But usually he can impress his will on his weak, troubled patients, all while endearing himself to their relations. <b>Rezia</b> is an exception to this rule, as she dislikes Sir William after their consultation. She walks down Harley Street, and the clocks there seem to divide and eat away at time, to uphold conformity and promote proportion.	1	2	3	4	5	Time and the ticking of clocks mean many different things to characters in the novel, and to Rezia the uniform motion of clocks now seems to reinforce Sir William’s demand to conform. After her initial (ironic) praise of Sir William’s tact and philanthropy, Woolf now fully shows Sir William for what he is – a psychological bully.



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<p>The narrative now follows <b>Hugh Whitbread</b>, who is examining shoes and socks in a shop window. Hugh “brushes the surfaces” of things, dabbling in different hobbies and living in different places. There is no real substance to him, but he is always well-dressed and courteous. He is on his way to have lunch at <b>Lady Bruton’s</b> with <b>Richard Dalloway</b>. Hugh brings Lady Bruton <b>carnations</b>, as he has on every visit for the last twenty years.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Woolf draws a significant connection between Sir William and Hugh now, as Hugh is the epitome of the conformity and “proportion” that Sir William worships. We get hardly anything from Hugh’s inner dialogue, as Woolf seems to say that he has nothing underneath his outer appearance of gentility.</p>
<p><b>Hugh</b> arrives and greets <b>Lady Bruton’s</b> assistant, <b>Milly Brush</b>, who can’t stand him. Lady Bruton, who is sixty-two, prefers <b>Richard</b> to Hugh but still feels that Hugh is kind and worthwhile. She does not like “cutting people up” the way <b>Clarissa</b> does. Richard arrives and Lady Bruton tells them that she wants their help, but they won’t talk business until after lunch.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>The upper class characters generally defend each other’s flaws as they try to preserve tradition and their role as the elite. This is most tellingly shown in Lady Bruton defense of Hugh. Lady Bruton recognizes the differences between Clarissa and most others of her class—she recognizes Clarissa’s ability to judge people, and refuses to engage in such behavior.</p>
<p>Lunch appears soundlessly and almost magically, with many delicious servings borne in by white-capped maids. Overall it creates an illusion that no one set the table, cooked the dishes, or paid for it all. <b>Richard Dalloway</b> watches <b>Lady Bruton</b> holding <b>Hugh’s carnations</b></p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>The greatest evil of a luncheon like this is the “invisibility” of all the servants and cooks. Part of the privilege of the upper class is that they don’t have to look at the poor and engage with them. Peter can give a coin to the old woman and move on.</p>

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and thinks of how she looks just like her ancestor, the great general in the portrait behind her.						
<p><b>Richard</b> thinks that <b>Lady Bruton</b> is like a general herself, and that he would have gladly served under her. He has great respect for her and likes well-set-up women from great families. Lady Bruton asks him about <b>Clarissa</b>, and Richard thinks of how Clarissa feels that Lady Bruton doesn't like her. Lady Bruton is indeed "more interested in politics than people," which is the opposite of Clarissa, and Lady Bruton feels that Clarissa may have held Richard back in his political career.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>As with Peter and Clarissa's meeting, this luncheon involves little communication, but Woolf's free indirect discourse adds layers of meaning to the small talk. Lady Bruton is the most "feminist" character of the book, as she shrugs off the limitations of her gender, but she is also portrayed negatively because of her adherence to English tradition and conformity.</p>
<p><b>Hugh</b> interrupts to say that he met <b>Clarissa</b> that morning. <b>Lady Bruton</b> says that <b>Peter Walsh</b> is back in town, and they all remember how passionately Peter had loved Clarissa, and how he had then "made a mess of things" in India. At that moment <b>Richard</b> decides that he will find Clarissa after lunch and tell her that he loves her.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Richard is a simple, traditional soul, but he is at least a kind man and does love Clarissa. The past at Bourton often seems more real than the present, and is overwhelming even at this luncheon where neither Clarissa, Peter, nor Sally are present.</p>
<p><b>Milly Brush</b> feels that she might have been able to fall in love with <b>Richard</b> once. Richard, <b>Lady Bruton</b>, and <b>Hugh</b> all feel vaguely flattered that</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Everyone recognizes that Peter prefers fantasy and melodrama to genuine engagement and communication, so they realize that he will proudly</p>

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<p><b>Peter Walsh</b> has returned to England unsuccessful. They all want to help him but feel it is impossible “because of his character.” Hugh asks for Peter’s address and promises to write recommendations for him, but everyone knows it will come to nothing.</p>						<p>reject any offer of help. Hugh still goes through the motions, though, as he has no sense of the deeper parts of someone’s soul.</p>
<p>After the lunch is over <b>Lady Bruton</b> moves immediately to business. Her cause, which she is so wrapped up in that it has become an inseparable part of her, is Emigration – sending well-born young people to Canada, which at that time was an English colony. The narrator says she has “lost her sense of proportion” in her devotion to this cause. Lady Bruton wants to write a letter to the <i>Times</i> about emigration, but she is having great trouble, so she invited <b>Richard</b> and <b>Hugh</b> to help her.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Just as the source of the extravagant luncheon is invisible, so Lady Bruton tries to solve England’s problems by exporting them to Canada. There is also a xenophobic aspect to this cause, as she is perhaps trying to “civilize” Canada with the English upper classes. Lady Bruton has “lost her sense of proportion” just like Septimus, but <i>she</i> is protected by her wealth and class.</p>
<p><b>Richard</b> advises <b>Lady Bruton</b> on her points and <b>Hugh</b> writes the letter for her, as he knows how to appeal to editors. Richard thinks that Hugh’s letter is nonsensical and flowery, but Lady Bruton loves it. She puts Hugh’s <b>carnations</b> in the front of her dress and calls him “My <b>Prime Minister!</b>”</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Lady Bruton, like most other characters, has a difficulty in communicating when trying to write her letter. Hugh seems like a smooth, effective communicator but his words carry no real weight. “Prime Minister” was an insult for Peter (when he suggested who Clarissa would marry), but it is a compliment for Lady Bruton and Hugh, again highlighting their</p>

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						connection to tradition and inability to see beyond that tradition.
The two men leave, and on his way out <b>Richard</b> admires the portrait of <b>Lady Bruton's</b> ancestor. He has been planning on writing a history of her family, which has consisted of many great military men. Richard will do this when he has some leisure time – when the Labour Party comes into power. Richard reminds Lady Bruton of <b>Clarissa's</b> party, and she says that she might or might not come.	1	2	3	4	5	Though Lady Bruton is a powerful, independent woman, Woolf shows how irrelevant she is to modern life here. Instead of affecting the future, she and her family are fitting subjects for history books. Richard is a member of the Conservative Party, which is about to be replaced by the more liberal Labour Party.
After the men leave <b>Lady Bruton</b> lies down “majestically” on the sofa. She gets sleepy and imagines herself as a girl, riding on a pony with her brothers out in the country. Then she returns to the present and is pleased at having such able, respectable men (like <b>Richard</b> and <b>Hugh</b> ) as her friends. Hugh and Richard seem attached to Lady Bruton by a thread, which grows thinner as they move farther away. Finally the thread snaps and Lady Bruton falls asleep.	1	2	3	4	5	Woolf now shows Lady Bruton's naïveté by having her consider Richard and Hugh such fine examples of men – particularly Hugh, as Richard is actually able and goodhearted. With the image of the thread Woolf adds to the idea of an extensive network of overlapping characters, individual souls who sometimes brush against each other.
<b>Hugh</b> and <b>Richard</b> walk along together and look in some shop windows. Hugh admires a Spanish necklace and considers	1	2	3	4	5	Even the conventional, unimaginative Richard dislikes Hugh, as Richard is a man of honesty and principles, and Hugh is all

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<p>buying it for his wife <b>Evelyn</b>. Richard follows him into the store, drawn along by the mere force of inertia, as he doesn't particularly like Hugh and doesn't care at all about Emigration.</p>						<p>about surfaces and excess. We finally get Richard's point of view and find him more sympathetic.</p>
<p><b>Hugh</b> demands to be seen by a particular clerk and <b>Richard</b> considers buying something for <b>Clarissa</b>. He once gave her a bracelet, but she never wears it, which pains him to remember. Richard thinks about <b>Elizabeth</b> and about <b>Peter Walsh's</b> passionate love for Clarissa. He notes that Hugh is being even more pompous than normal, and is "becoming an intolerable ass." Richard leaves the store.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Richard recognizes that he lacks the passion and drama of Peter, and so he avoids making romantic gestures to Clarissa even though he loves her in his own way. Hugh never has to face repercussions for his sins because of his wealth and status.</p>
<p><b>Richard</b> heads home to see <b>Clarissa</b>, feeling especially affectionate because of his thoughts of <b>Peter Walsh</b>. He buys a bouquet of red and white roses to bring to her, and plans to say "I love you" to her, which he hasn't said in years. Richard suddenly feels that their relationship and life together is a miracle considering the war, and he thinks that he should declare his love more often.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Richard shows his lack of poetry in the way he handles flowers, "bearing them like a weapon" in the next section. Clarissa, by contrast, feels comforted and rejuvenated among flowers. Richard doesn't have to deal with the war in the way Septimus does, but he does appreciate how lucky he is.</p>
<p><b>Richard</b> passes some homeless children and police, and he thinks about</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Richard is a kind man who works to help the poor, but he still avoids actually</p>

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<p>his desire for social reform. In Green Park he walks past a <b>homeless woman</b> reclining on the ground, looking as if “rid of all ties.” Richard approaches her “bearing his <b>flowers</b> like a weapon,” and the woman laughs at him. He smiles and walks on, considering the problem of vagrancy but not wanting to actually talk to the woman.</p>						<p>engaging and communicating with people outside his social class. The vagrant woman is powerless in English society, but she still has power in her freedom and individuality, like Sally as a youth.</p>
<p><b>Richard</b> thinks of <b>Peter Walsh</b> and how he used to be jealous of Peter. Now he agrees with <b>Clarissa</b> when she says she was right not to marry Peter, as Richard feels that Clarissa needs support, and Peter could not have supported her. Richard passes Buckingham Palace and thinks about how it is dignified and symbolic, but also a little silly. Richard likes the tradition of the monarchy, though he recognizes its basic hollowness.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Richard loves Clarissa, but he still thinks of her in female stereotypes, as a woman who needs his support. He is right that Peter would have been an emotional drain, though. Richard also recognizes the absurdity and meaninglessness of the English hierarchy, but he still chooses to believe in it because it gives him comfort.</p>
<p>At home, <b>Clarissa</b> is upset because her “dull” cousin <b>Ellie Henderson</b> has asked to come to her party, and now she cannot refuse. She is also irritated that <b>Elizabeth</b> is currently holed up with <b>Doris Kilman</b>, praying. <b>Big Ben</b> strikes three and at that moment <b>Richard</b> enters. He gives her the <b>roses</b> but is unable to say “I love</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Clarissa is at her snobbiest here, especially when we learn that Ellie Henderson is poorer than everyone else invited to the party. Richard fails at true communication and is unable to even confess his love verbally. That he feels Clarissa understands is not a guarantee that she does understand, and so much human interaction is full of</p>

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you,” though he feels she understands.						just that sort of uncertainty.
<b>Richard</b> wants <b>Clarissa</b> to take a break from her preparations, and they sit down together. Richard holds her hand and thinks “happiness is this” while Clarissa complains about <b>Ellie Henderson</b> and <b>Doris Kilman</b> . Richard has to go to a meeting about Armenians (or Albanians, Clarissa can’t remember), and Clarissa thinks about the gulf between every person, even a husband and wife.	1	2	3	4	5	Richard’s meeting is about the Armenian Genocide, and we see how Richard, though dull and unimaginative, is actually trying to do some good in the world, while Clarissa’s life is still painfully insular. Clarissa’s thoughts on the loneliness of the soul condense one the novel’s main themes.
Before he leaves, <b>Richard</b> sets <b>Clarissa</b> up for “an hour’s complete rest after luncheon,” as per the doctor’s orders, and Clarissa muses on his “adorable, divine simplicity.” She recognizes that she cares more for parties than for politics, “more for her <b>roses</b> than for the Armenians,” but she grows suddenly unhappy because Richard and <b>Peter</b> criticize and trivialize her love of throwing parties. Clarissa realizes that she just likes life, and she has parties as a kind of an offering, though she doesn’t know to whom.	1	2	3	4	5	Clarissa’s regimented post-influenza existence is similar to Woolf’s own. Because of her nervous breakdowns and headaches, Woolf’s husband Leonard kept her on a strict schedule. This is sort of the thesis statement for Clarissa’s current existence – her instinctual love of life, and her desire to bring people together and spread this joy. Just as in Peter’s dream, where he wondered who he could reply to, Clarissa doesn’t know to whom she is offering her parties. There is no God or savior for these modern characters – they must find answers alone.
<b>Clarissa</b> thinks about how this is her only gift – having parties as an offering of life. She thinks	1	2	3	4	5	Death is paradoxical in its existence in the novel – it is always at hand, just on the other side of joy and



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about the events of the day and how unbelievable death is, considering all the moments and sensations that must someday end. She drifts off to sleep.						optimism, but at the same time it seems impossible that all the infinite threads of life should suddenly be cut off.
<b>Elizabeth</b> comes in quietly, knowing that her mother is resting. The narrator describes her as darker and more exotic-looking than her parents. She is seventeen and has recently grown very serious. <b>Miss Kilman</b> waits for her outside the room, wearing her mackintosh. Miss Kilman wears the mackintosh because she is poor and she has no desire to please anyone with her appearance. She finds <b>Clarissa</b> rich, shallow, and condescending, but admits that <b>Richard</b> is kind.	1	2	3	4	5	We finally delve into the point of view of Elizabeth and Miss Kilman. Miss Kilman is the opposite of Clarissa – poor, unattractive, charmless, and bitter against life. But even Miss Kilman is (at least at first) a sympathetic character because of her situation, as she has had none of the privileges Clarissa had in her life.
<b>Doris Kilman</b> feels that she has been cheated out of happiness in life. She has always been poor, clumsy, and unattractive. At the school she had taught at she was fired because of her German ancestry and her sympathetic views of Germany during the war – simply saying that they were not all monsters. Then <b>Richard Dalloway</b> found her and hired her as a tutor for <b>Elizabeth</b> .	1	2	3	4	5	We first learn of all the reasons Miss Kilman has to justify her bitterness. Germany was portrayed as evil during the war, and having any kind of view that contradicted that opened one up to discrimination.
<b>Miss Kilman</b> had been	1	2	3	4	5	Miss Kilman is justified in

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converted to Christianity two years earlier, and since then she feels that she doesn't envy women like <b>Clarissa</b> , but only pities them. In reality she despises Clarissa, and wishes all the fine ladies like her could be sent to work in a factory. Miss Kilman had been converted when she went into a church, weeping with bitterness and hatred. Now she tries to think of God whenever this hatred returns.						her unhappiness, but she crosses the line when she uses her bitterness as fuel for her desire for conversion and domination. She is like Sir William, trying to violate the privacy of the soul with conversion, though Miss Kilman is a poor woman and so lacks Sir William's power and effectiveness.
Looking at <b>Clarissa</b> , <b>Doris Kilman</b> thinks of God and suddenly feels serene and righteous. Clarissa gets up to greet Miss Kilman (while <b>Elizabeth</b> goes to get her gloves), and Miss Kilman feels a desire to "fell her" and show her mastery over Clarissa. She wants to make Clarissa cry, but she wants to do it with religious righteousness. Clarissa is shocked by the hatred in Miss Kilman's eyes and cannot believe that this woman is trying to steal Elizabeth from her.	1	2	3	4	5	Clarissa's sister was killed by a falling tree, and Miss Kilman now wants to "fell" Clarissa. Elsewhere in the novel trees (with their complex systems of branches and roots) have been associated with souls, and so this implies that Doris Kilman wants to "fell" souls just like Sir William. Clarissa, who is sensitive to the individuality of the soul (just like Septimus), is horrified by this.
<b>Elizabeth</b> returns and <b>Doris Kilman's</b> threat, which is like a "prehistoric monster," suddenly seems to shrink and crumble. <b>Clarissa</b> laughs at Miss Kilman and says goodbye. She calls out for Elizabeth to remember her party. After they are gone,	1	2	3	4	5	Clarissa's hatred for Miss Kilman was described as a kind of monster, and now Miss Kilman is a monster herself. Love and religion are usually portrayed as positive ideals for humanity, but to Clarissa (and perhaps to Woolf as well) their tendency to try

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Clarissa thinks that love and religion are the cruelest things in the world, always trying to dominate and convert others.						and convert and dominate others makes them harmful.
<b>Clarissa</b> looks out the window and watches an <b>old woman</b> in the house opposite hers climb upstairs and look out the window. The old woman has no idea she is being watched, and Clarissa is comforted by this. Somehow the old woman's existence reassures her of the "privacy of the soul," the thing that love, religion, and the <b>Doris Kilmans</b> of the world try to destroy. Clarissa and the old woman have been neighbors for years but have never spoken.	1	2	3	4	5	Woolf's most famous essay is called "A Room of One's Own," and throughout her work separate rooms act as representations of individual souls. This scene condenses the heart of the novel, and the paradox between aloneness and communication. The lack of communication between Clarissa and the old woman is tragic in a way, but at the same time it comforts Clarissa about the privacy of the soul. Clarissa watching the old woman also resonates with the singing woman's words: "If some one should see, what matter they?"
Love seems just as bad as religion to <b>Clarissa</b> , and she thinks of <b>Peter Walsh</b> as an example – he is a wonderful man intellectually and by himself, but when he is in love he becomes selfish and vulgar. <b>Big Ben</b> strikes three-thirty, and Clarissa thinks that neither <b>Miss Kilman</b> 's religion nor Peter Walsh's love solve the mystery of the soul. The true heart of life exists in the fact that the <b>old woman</b> has her room, and Clarissa has her own.	1	2	3	4	5	The paradox of privacy and communication for Clarissa, Septimus, and Woolf is that human souls are inherently alone, as true communication is difficult or impossible – we all exist in separate rooms – but there can also be a comfort in this privacy. The windows and doors of these rooms then become means of connection and communication. Clarissa takes the door off its hinges to throw her party, which is in itself an attempt to reach out to other people.

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<p><b>Doris Kilman</b> goes outside with <b>Elizabeth</b>, trying to control her hatred of <b>Clarissa</b>. Miss Kilman thinks that Clarissa laughed at her for her ugliness, and she tries to suppress her desire to resemble Clarissa. Despite her desire to “master” Clarissa, Miss Kilman was almost reduced to tears by her laughter.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Doris Kilman has been badly treated by fate and society, but she uses this unfairness as a justification for hatred and domination. Kilman’s personal tragedy is that she fails even in this, as Clarissa can overcome her simply with laughter.</p>
<p><b>Miss Kilman</b> walks and prays, thinking bitterly that she has been denied all the pleasures and luxuries that were given to <b>Clarissa Dalloway</b>. All Miss Kilman lives for now is <b>Elizabeth</b>, food, and her small comforts of tea and a hot-water bottle at night. She thinks of her pastor’s words, saying that she must suffer to gain knowledge, but Miss Kilman feels that no one suffers like she does.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>All of Miss Kilman’s pleasures come from the jealous possession of something, even her self-pity, as she enjoys thinking that no one suffers as she does. It is this possessiveness that is so horrifying to sensitive individuals like Clarissa.</p>
<p><b>Elizabeth</b> guides <b>Miss Kilman</b> into the Army and Navy Stores, where Miss Kilman distractedly buys a petticoat. They have tea and Miss Kilman eats “with intensity,” feeling resentment at a little girl who eats the pink cake she wanted. Miss Kilman talks to Elizabeth about how not everyone thinks the English are “invariably right,” and tells her that all professions are open to women of her generation.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Elizabeth is a rather passive character, but she is interested in the ideas Miss Kilman proposes. She seems unaware or uncaring of Miss Kilman’s possessive love, however, and Clarissa’s fear that Elizabeth is “falling in love” with Miss Kilman seems unfounded.</p>

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<p><b>Elizabeth</b> thinks about how her mother and <b>Miss Kilman</b> are opposites and don't get along, but Elizabeth respects both women and recognizes that her mother makes an effort to be kind to Miss Kilman. Once <b>Clarissa</b> had offered Miss Kilman <b>flowers</b> from Bourton, and Miss Kilman had squashed them in a bunch.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Flowers again act as a symbol of beauty and the joy in life, as Miss Kilman squashes them in her domineering hand. Elizabeth seems remarkably disinterested and wise for her age, though she takes little action of her own.</p>
<p><b>Elizabeth</b> soon feels stifled by <b>Miss Kilman's</b> litany of self-pity, and she says she has to go. Miss Kilman is desperate to keep Elizabeth with her, and she makes her wait until she finishes her tea. Miss Kilman longs to have total possession over Elizabeth, thinking that she "genuinely loves" her, and she fears that Elizabeth will leave her for <b>Clarissa</b>. Miss Kilman continues her self-pitying tirade, though she knows it is unappealing to Elizabeth.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>There is another undercurrent of homosexual attraction in Miss Kilman's possessive love for Elizabeth, but again it is repressed and so leads to unhealthy consequences. As a force of domination and conversion (like Sir William) Doris Kilman's love is not romantic or intimate, but possessive and crushing of the individual being loved.</p>
<p>Finally <b>Elizabeth</b> gets up, pays, and leaves, and <b>Miss Kilman</b> feels broken. Elizabeth has left her, and with her has gone youth and beauty. She thinks that <b>Clarissa Dalloway</b> has triumphed. Miss Kilman blunders off through the streets in a daze and then goes into Westminster Cathedral to pray. Even within the</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Unlike Sir William, Doris Kilman is ineffective in her attempts to "colonize" other people's souls. She is poor and female, and so has no power in this society – she is truly a tragic character, unhappy and bitter and trying to spread her unhappiness to others, but totally ineffective.</p>

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cathedral she thinks resentfully that it is easier for other churchgoers to pray than it is for her.						
<b>Elizabeth</b> is pleased to be alone, and wishes she lived in the country with her father and dogs instead of in London. She gets on an omnibus, but has no particular destination. People have started to notice Elizabeth's beauty, and she finds the invitations to parties and the streams of compliments boring – men comparing her to <b>flowers</b> , trees, and other clichéd poetic images.	1	2	3	4	5	Elizabeth's thoughts reflect Peter's musings on Richard (as a man who should live in the country with dogs), and show how Elizabeth is closer to her father than to her mother. Woolf shows the more clichéd side of the flower symbol, as it becomes boring when used to describe female beauty. There is also a hint of the way that beauty becomes a kind of trap for the beautiful, forcing them into convention through the attention of others.
<b>Elizabeth</b> is delighted to be free of <b>Miss Kilman's</b> self-pity, and she enjoys the freedom of the omnibus. She considers what she should do with her life. She likes people and animals who are "ill," and so thinks of becoming a doctor, a farmer, or a member of Parliament. She rides the bus through the Strand, a busy, working-class area that her parents never visit.	1	2	3	4	5	Elizabeth considers the career options becoming more open to women now – the things Doris Kilman listed while pitying herself for having no such options. Elizabeth at least seems to take a greater interest in the poor than most members of her class.
<b>Elizabeth</b> thinks that her ideas about a career are silly, and she recognizes that she is rather lazy, so she will mention them to no one. Elizabeth tries to find a clock, knowing that her mother wants her	1	2	3	4	5	Elizabeth has a good heart and considers her future, but she takes little real action and merely drifts about on the omnibus. It seems unlikely that she will take any radical action in her life to help others or

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home soon. It is later than she had thought, so Elizabeth boards another bus and returns home.						change her own status.
Meanwhile <b>Septimus</b> is sitting on the couch at home, watching sunlight play along the wallpaper and thinking of the line from Shakespeare's <i>Cymbeline</i> - "Fear no more." <b>Rezia</b> is sitting at the table, making a hat. She sees Septimus smile but she is disturbed by it.	1	2	3	4	5	Septimus starts to grow ecstatic at the beauty in everyday life, just as Clarissa does, and he shares her meditations on the quote from <i>Cymbeline</i> .
<b>Rezia</b> thinks of the strange things <b>Septimus</b> has been doing lately, like talking to <b>Evans</b> , writing down bits of nonsense (some of it beautiful, though), and talking about <b>Dr. Holmes</b> as a representation of something horrible. Rezia feels that he is no longer her husband, and so they no longer have a real marriage.	1	2	3	4	5	Rezia feels that gulf between husband and wife that Clarissa was describing to herself. Rezia feels that Septimus is a wholly different person since his illness, and a stranger to her now.
<b>Rezia</b> is making a hat for <b>Mrs. Peters</b> , the large, married daughter of <b>Mrs. Filmer</b> , the Smith's neighbor. Rezia talks aloud about her work and <b>Septimus</b> opens his eyes cautiously, noticing the "real things" around him. Septimus feels suddenly lucid, contrasting his mad prophesying with the mundane details of Mrs. Peters' life.	1	2	3	4	5	Septimus starts to experience a time of sanity and happiness just before he is reminded of cruel human nature. He can see the world clearly now, and is comforted by the mundane life around him, the kind of bustle and gossip that Clarissa delights in.



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<p><b>Septimus</b> says the hat is too small for <b>Mrs. Peters</b>, and he starts to speak in a lucid way for the first time in weeks. Septimus jokes with <b>Rezia</b>, who is overjoyed. Septimus has a good eye for color, and he designs the hat. Rezia starts stitching it together, and Septimus feels that he is in a warm place, like on the edge of the woods. When it is done, Septimus feels that the hat is the greatest accomplishment of his life.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>The image of threads as connecting souls is appropriate for this scene, as Rezia and Septimus finally have a moment of intimacy and communication while doing something prosaic: sewing together a hat. This reprieve of happiness makes the following scene all the more tragic.</p>
<p>In the future <b>Rezia</b> will always like this hat, and cherish the happy memory of making it with <b>Septimus</b>. There is a tap on the door and Rezia worries that it is <b>Sir William</b>, but it is the small girl who delivers them the evening paper. Rezia kisses the child, brings her some sweets, and dances her around the room. Septimus reads the paper and starts to get tired, but he feels very happy. He falls asleep.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>The girl is Mrs. Filmer's granddaughter, and Rezia is made even more joyful by her appearance, as Rezia had always wanted children. The knock on the door is a reminder of the outside world, though, and the men trying to dominate Septimus's fragile soul.</p>
<p><b>Septimus</b> wakes up and is terrified to find that he is alone. <b>Rezia</b> has gone to bring the girl back to her mother. Septimus thinks that he is doomed to be alone forever as punishment for being unable to feel. His visions of beautiful objects are gone, and he is surrounded</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Septimus seems to suddenly feel the "emptiness at the heart of life" that Clarissa did when she returned from her morning stroll. There was a comfort in Septimus's beautiful fantasies, and now they are gone and he is left to dread the approach of Sir William's condemnation.</p>

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by ordinary things. Septimus calls out for <b>Evans</b> , but there is no answer.						
<b>Rezia</b> returns, talking about <b>Mrs. Peters</b> . She feels happy and comfortable with <b>Septimus</b> now, like she can be honest with him. She remembers the first time they met, when he seemed like a shy young hawk. She asks Septimus's opinion about the hat, and they both dread the approaching arrival of <b>Sir William</b> 's message, which will send Septimus to be committed.	1	2	3	4	5	Septimus and Rezia both feel the approach of the overbearing doctors now, and they try to preserve the happy moment they have created. Rezia is overjoyed to finally feel less alone.
<b>Septimus</b> asks why he must be separated from <b>Rezia</b> , and asks why <b>Sir William</b> has the right to control his life. Rezia says that it is because Septimus threatened suicide. Septimus feels that he has been overpowered by both <b>Holmes</b> and Bradshaw now. Septimus asks Rezia for the papers on which he and Rezia had written down all his ramblings. He tells Rezia to burn them all, but Rezia wants to save them because some are beautiful, so she ties them up with silk.	1	2	3	4	5	Now that he is lucid, Septimus sees how he has been dominated by the doctors and forced to conform to Sir William's conventions. He tries to preserve the poetry of his soul by burning his papers and saving them from Holmes and Bradshaw.
<b>Rezia</b> promises to go wherever <b>Septimus</b> goes, and as she gathers the papers and ties them up Septimus thinks of her as a	1	2	3	4	5	An individual is again compared to a tree, and flowers are again associated with women and beauty. Septimus sees

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<p>“flowering tree,” a fearless sanctuary, a “miracle” to triumph over <b>Holmes</b> and <b>Bradshaw</b>. Rezia goes to pack their things so that they won’t be separated if Septimus is sent away.</p>						<p>Rezia’s individuality and love as a haven against human nature.</p>
<p><b>Rezia</b> hears <b>Dr. Holmes</b> downstairs and runs to prevent him coming up. Holmes pushes his way past her, saying he is there “as a friend,” and heads up the stairs. <b>Septimus</b> hears him coming and thinks of different ways to kill himself and escape. He finally decides to throw himself from the window.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>When Dr. Holmes arrives Septimus sees his choice as killing himself or giving up his soul to the doctors. He is trying to escape the embodiment of repulsive human nature, but also to defy it by controlling his own fate.</p>
<p><b>Septimus</b> does not want to die, as “life was good” and “the sun hot.” He thinks that his death will be the doctors’ idea of a tragedy, not his or <b>Rezia</b>’s. Septimus looks out the window and sees an <b>old man</b> coming down the staircase in the apartment across the way. The old man stops and stares at him, and <b>Holmes</b> opens the door. Septimus yells “I’ll give it you!” and throws himself out the window, landing on <b>Mrs. Filmer</b>’s railings.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>If rooms act as sealed, incommunicable souls, then windows are a kind of bridge between them, and so Septimus’s means of suicide becomes a kind of desperate act of communication. The old man across the way reflects Clarissa’s old woman in the window, but the old man is leaving the privacy of his room. Septimus also leaves his privacy even as he sacrifices himself to preserve his agency and individuality. The quote from <i>Cymbeline</i> appears again. Septimus’s last words show that he is making an “offering” of his death – no one is taking it from him – just as Clarissa’s parties are an offering.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Holmes</b> immediately</p>	1	2	3	4	5	<p>Septimus had obviously</p>

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calls <b>Septimus</b> a coward, but <b>Rezia</b> now understands her husband. <b>Mrs. Filmer</b> rushes in and she and Holmes try to comfort Rezia. Holmes gives her a sweet drink that makes her sleepy, and he wonders aloud what reason Septimus could possibly have for killing himself.						threatened suicide many times, so Dr. Holmes is being purposefully ignorant to absolve himself of blame. He immediately drugs Rezia, keeping her from perceiving Holmes's guilt too clearly (though it is unclear if Holme's is himself also blind to his own guilt).
The clock strikes as <b>Rezia</b> gets sleepy, and she thinks about the war and her happy memories with <b>Septimus</b> . <b>Holmes</b> says that Rezia should not watch as Septimus's body is carried away, as it is so mangled. Rezia sees Dr. Holmes's outline against the window just as she falls asleep, and she thinks, "So that was Dr. Holmes."	1	2	3	4	5	Septimus's death is tragic, but even Rezia immediately thinks happy thoughts about her husband and seems to "understand" his act. Woolf creates the suicide so that it is almost a positive action, a desperate but viable way of dealing with the loneliness and cruelty of the world. It's worth noting that Woolf herself also eventually committed suicide.