

***Anthem* by Ayn Rand**

Discussion Questions

After reading each chapter, answer the following questions handwritten in complete sentences (unless it says “note form”) on a separate sheet of paper in MLA format. Please have these answers complete and with you on the first day of school. Our “Struggle for Freedom” unit begins with this text, and we will be using these answers as an impetus for discussions, quizzes, and an essay. I know I don’t have to say this, but please do your own work. Plagiarism is stealing and cheating and will result in a zero. Thank you.

Chapter I

- 1) What literary form does Ayn Rand use to tell the story in *Anthem*?
- 2) What is the setting of the story? Does it take place in the past, present or future? How do you know?
- 3) To help create setting, Rand uses color imagery. Find two examples in the chapter. What colors does the author use? What image is she trying to convey?
- 4) The first page of *Anthem* begins, “It is a sin to write this.” Using textual evidence, explain why Equality is committing a sin when he writes.
- 5) Equality describes himself as having a curse. What is that curse? How would your teachers react if you had Equality's "curse"?
- 6) Rand wanted Equality 7-2521 to stand out from his brothers. Explain how she accomplished this by contrasting Equality 7-2521’s physical attributes to those of his fellow men.
- 7) Why do Equality’s teachers disapprove of his quick mind?
- 8) Why does the Council of Vocations assign Equality the job of street sweeper? Is it due to error, incompetence, or a more sinister motivation? Explain.
- 9) In this chapter, Equality 7-2521 states that it is very unusual for men to reach the age of 45. Offer several possible explanations as to why life expectancy is so short in his society.
- 10) Equality has identified a number of “transgressions” of which he is guilty of. Name three of them. Identify one transgression you share with him. How would you react in his situation?
- 11) At this point in the novel, does Equality accept the moral teachings of his society? If so, why doesn’t he feel shame or remorse when he knows that he is committing a crime? Find textual evidence to support your answer.
- 12) Describe the society in which *Anthem* is set. Consider each of the following: political structure, degree of technology, social relationships, quality of life, and education.

Chapter II

- 1) Reread the account of Liberty 5-3000 (38-39). What character traits are revealed in this brief description?
- 2) Identify several examples of the ways in which this society tries to obliterate each individual's mind (and self) by quashing personal choices, desires, and values.
- 3) Of the whole range of feelings possible to man (joy, excitement, anger, embarrassment, etc.), why is **fear** the prevalent emotion in this society?
- 4) Equality chooses to give Liberty a different name, what is it?
- 5) Using the descriptions on pages 46 and 47, contrast Equality with the rest of the men living in this society.
- 6) Equality says “a word steals into our mind, as we look upon our brothers” (46). What is that word and why would that be the word he thinks of?
- 7) Explain the following terms in note form:
 - a. The Great Truth
 - b. the Unmentionable Times
 - c. the Uncharted Forest
 - d. the Evil Ones
 - e. the Great Rebirth

8) What word is Equality struggling to recapture at the end of this chapter? In your opinion, why is this word the only crime punishable by death in this society? How does this word contradict the ideals of this society? What could its rediscovery possibly lead to?

Chapter III

- 1) What does Equality discover in this chapter? How important is this discovery? Describe four or five ways in which it would help society and make life easier or more enjoyable.
- 2) Outline three of the Council of Scholars' beliefs. What does Equality say about those beliefs?

Chapter IV

- 1) What is the name that Liberty has given to Equality? Why does this name fit? Support your answer.

Chapter V

- 1) What does Equality invent in this chapter? Equality understands that his invention will benefit mankind greatly; however, this was not his main motivation for his experiments. What is the primary source of his "great joy"?
- 2) Equality is suddenly interested in seeing his own image. Why now? What emotions is he feeling?

Chapter VI

- 1) How did Equality become free from the Palace of Corrective Detention?
- 2) The old locks and lack of guards in the Palace of Corrective Detention indicate that prisoners have never tried to escape. According to the text, why not?

Chapter VII

- 1) In note form, outline three of the Council's reasons for rejecting Equality's invention.
- 2) What are the real reasons behind the Council's rejection and fear of the gift?
- 3) What does Equality mean at the beginning of the chapter when he says, "We are old now, but we were young this morning?" (68).
- 4) Equality states that "We are doomed" but he does not feel doomed. Explain how the way Equality really feels once he is in the Uncharted Forest is ironic.
- 5) Equality has not expressed regrets for his actions except for one. At the end of the chapter, what is Equality's great regret?

Chapter VIII

- 1) What is Equality experiencing for the first time in this chapter? What does he feel as a result?
- 2) Explain why Equality laughs when he remembers that he is "the Damned."
- 3) What does the Uncharted Forest symbolize in *Anthem*?
- 4) Equality bends to get a drink of water and has a new experience (80). What is the new experience? How does he react?

Chapter IX

- 1) Equality and Liberty are reunited in the Uncharted Forest. What is it that Equality says is the "bond" between them?
- 2) Read the quote that begins "There is some error, one frightful error . . . (86). In response to

this quote, what do you believe is the error that Equality is trying to identify?

3) In this chapter, Equality questions the morality of his former society. Contrast what he was previously taught about solitude, good, evil and joy to what he now believes.

Chapter X

1) Describe the house and its contents in your own words. Explain why Liberty and Equality find it so strange. Identify what they learn about themselves through these discoveries.

Chapter XI

1) What great discovery does Equality make in this chapter?

2) Explain the following quote in your own words:

“For the word ‘We’ must never be spoken, save by one’s choice and as a second thought.”

How can these quotes be applied to your life?

3) What does Equality now realize is the proper goal and purpose of his life?

4) Using examples from the text, explain in what ways “I” is like a God?

5) Reread the incident with the Saint of the Pyre on page 50. What was he trying to communicate to Equality?

Chapter XII

1) Equality and Liberty take new names again. What are their new names? What reason did Equality give for choosing the new names?

2) What does Equality plan to do in the future?

3) What is the sacred word that Equality says he will cut above the doors and print on his banners? In your own words, explain Equality’s new world view.

Making Connections:

Using the “dystopian novel notes”- In note form, list 5 ways in which *Anthem* fits into the genre of dystopian fiction. Be ready to defend your answers.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)