

Curative Shorts Questions
Gift of The Magi (2091 Words)
By O. Henry

Notes About Answering Questions Curatively: *These questions are meant to deepen your understanding of the story and its curative aspects for you, others, and the world around you. Curative Reading goes beyond understanding a story from a literary perspective to a place where your imagination gets to reshape a meaning that supports you and inspires you to make a positive transition in your life. There are no right or wrong answers, only curiously curative ones.*

According to Oxford Languages the word curative is defined as “able to cure disease” or “a remedy”. Think of dis-ease in terms of being ill-at-ease with any situation you may be facing right now that feels challenging. Write a line or two about that situation and what kind of positive change you would like to see happen with it. Hold the situation in the back of your mind as you read this story.

What was the moral reflection that O. Henry mentions in relation to Stella and her sobs in the opening of the story? Do you agree with this? If so why and if not, why not?

What is the meaning of a mendicancy squad in relation to the story?

“She stood by the window and looked out dully at a grey cat walking a grey fence in a grey backyard.” Stand by a window in your own home either physically or in your mind’s eye and write a sentence or two of what you look out at and how it makes you feel.

Della finds a platinum watch fob for Jim that she describes as being like him... “quietness and value”. Think of a partner in your life who you love, or imagine one in your future, and describe them with two words that could also apply to an object like Jim’s watch fo

“There were two possessions of the James Dillingham Youngs in which they both took a mighty pride.” Think of a possession in your own life that you may feel a strong attachment to that would be very difficult to let go of it, then try to imagine a situation where love would override that attachment to enable you to let it go. Write a line or two about this scenario.

Did you empathize more with either Della or Jim after you learned what they have sacrificed for love? If so, who do you choose and why?

What were the original gifts given to Jesus in the bible by The Magi? Can you create any curative connections between these gifts and the gifts Della and Jim each gave to each other for Christmas?

Has reading this story enabled you in any way to shift your challenging situation, or some other aspect of your life that may have surfaced while reading this story? Are you able to see your life through the lens of this story in a new light? If so, write a line or two about how this story has been curative for you.